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**SPIRITUAL VALUES  
AND  
WORLD AFFAIRS**



# SPIRITUAL VALUES AND WORLD AFFAIRS

BY

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## *PREFACE*

THIS volume contains the substance of a series of University lectures delivered between January 24 and March 4 of this year. As is explained in the opening chapter, they were intended primarily for students in the Faculty of Theology, though they were attended by others also.

In preparing them for publication I have made a few verbal changes and added footnotes in certain cases where I thought they would be helpful, but I have made no attempt to readjust any portion of the argument to the changed conditions of *British public opinion*.

A. Z.

NEW COLLEGE, OXFORD

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## I

### *SPIRITUAL VALUES AND THE THINGS THAT ARE CAESAR'S*

**I**T has been becoming increasingly clear during the last twenty years that the Churches in this country have, as the Quakers put it, a concern with problems of international relations.

This concern finds expression in numerous ways—in pronouncements by representative Church bodies (such as the Lambeth Conference of the Anglican Communion), in the utterances of leading individuals, such as archbishops and bishops, in sermons in churches and chapels, and in the personal influence of ministers. When one considers the cumulative effect of all this activity, reinforced as it is by the respect accorded to the utterances of religious spokesmen, both because of their high vocation and of their comparative detachment from material or partisan considerations, it is not difficult to understand why the influence of the Churches, in the broadest sense, should be a factor of considerable—sometimes, perhaps, of decisive—importance in the national life of this country—not to speak of the oversea Dominions and the United States.

Now this entails a corresponding responsibility on the Churches—not only on their leaders but also on individual ministers, to whom congregations look for guidance. This is not to say that sermons ought to deal with international relations or that Church

conferences ought to pass resolutions on these subjects. I do not wish to raise this issue, which would carry me much too far and raise controversial issues on which Christians have been divided throughout the history of Christendom. I simply accept the fact that the Churches *do* feel a concern about international relations and *do* wield an influence over public opinion.

That being so, it is obviously desirable that there should be a closer association than has existed in the past between the study of international relations, which has now found a place in the academic curriculum, and the world of organized religion, with its own field of learning. For it is not a light or easy matter to give a lead to public opinion on international affairs. It is a sphere where ignorance and inexperience are peculiarly dangerous and where amateurs, even gifted amateurs, can do untold harm. I am putting it mildly when I say that it is open to doubt whether the direct influence of the Churches on British foreign policy in the last twenty years has done more good than harm, I will not say to Britain but to mankind as a whole. In saying this I am, of course, distinguishing between the direct influence of the Churches on particular issues and their indirect influence—their permanent underlying influence—on the temper of national policy.

Let me give one instance—no doubt an extreme instance of the kind of thing I mean. In the early months of 1932 Mr. Ramsay MacDonald's Government was paving the way for an International Con-

ference, which later took place at Lausanne, to clear up finally the question of German reparations. For this purpose it was necessary to obtain the consent of the French Government, to whom the bulk of this German debt was due. Now, in the action which the British Government was taking there was a double motive. They desired to get rid of these German political debts, firstly because they thought it would be of advantage to Europe generally and thus to the whole world, secondly because it would be of particular advantage to this country, and in this country to financial and industrial circles, since it would make it easier for Germany to pay her very considerable commercial debts to British creditors. Thus the issue between Great Britain and France was not so much the abolition of reparations as whether political debts or commercial debts, that is to say, French debts or British debts, were to have priority. Rather a delicate matter when it is remembered what the political debts represented to the French mind—four and a quarter years of enemy occupation of a considerable area of their country. Now, at this juncture, a group of gifted amateurs, including certain leading Anglicans and Free Churchmen, issued a manifesto, couched in religious—not to say sanctimonious—language in favour of the cancellation of all reparations 'by forgiveness', backing up their appeal by a quotation from the Sermon on the Mount.<sup>1</sup> I call

<sup>1</sup> The manifesto was published in the *Manchester Guardian* of 21 Jan. 1932. The first part summarizes the arguments and conclusions

them gifted amateurs, because if they had been deliberately meditating sabotage they could hardly have hit on a course of procedure so likely to be damaging to their professed cause. Imagine the effect of their statement in Paris, where, of course, it seemed clear evidence of the existence of a private wire between Church House, Westminster, and the Bank of England. 'British hypocrisy.' No, of course not. It was only British ignorance. 'Fools rush in where angels fear to tread.' Yes, but when the fools profess to be ministering angels, is not their folly double-dyed?

This is not an isolated instance. Would that it were! There have been even more striking instances within the last twelve months. But it is no part of the purpose of these pages to multiply criticism. Their aim is more positive. It is to contribute towards the understanding of the subject as a whole and the growth of a corresponding habit of mind, such as will prevent the recurrence of similar blunders on future occasions. Such comments upon ecclesiastical utterances and attitudes as will be found in them have been included merely for purposes of illustration—in order

of the International Bankers Conference presided over by Mr. Albert Wiggin of the Chase National Bank of New York. These financial considerations are used to 'give additional force', in the second part of the document, 'to the appeal which we are constrained to make on other grounds'—an appeal for a 'great and comprehensive act of reconciliation', made in the name of 'the Prince of Peace'. The signatories included sixteen bishops of the Church of England and a number of prominent Free Church ministers drawn from eight different bodies.

to bring out more clearly what is involved in this responsibility of the Christian ministry in the field of international affairs.

The title of this chapter, and of this book, has been chosen deliberately in order to emphasize that, in what is said in these pages, there is no desire to exclude any religious communion or any form of religious experience—and there are many such represented in this country, not least in our universities.<sup>1</sup> The general framework of the discussion will, however, be on Christian lines and in relation to the Christian Gospel.

To discuss the relation between religion and politics within the limits of a short chapter is an almost impossible task; for the theme is at once too complex and too profound. It spreads too far afield and goes too deep. It may be helpful, therefore, at the outset to fix the outlines of our discussion by relating it to three texts from the Gospel.

The following passages, taken together, contain the gist of the argument of the succeeding pages.

The first is from the Fourth Gospel:

‘God is Spirit, and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.’

The second is from St. Mark’s Gospel:

‘And the Pharisees came forth and began to question with him, seeking of him a sign from heaven, tempting

<sup>1</sup> For instance, there is at Oxford a Chair of Eastern Religions and Ethics and there are also Lectureships in Chinese Philosophy and Religion and in Post-Biblical Jewish Studies.

him—and he sighed deeply in his spirit and saith, Why doth this generation seek after a sign? Verily I say unto you, *there shall no sign be given unto this generation.*'

Let me here pause for a personal reminiscence. Early in November 1918, just about the time of the Armistice, a friend of mine at the Foreign Office who was working on the British draft of the League of Nations wrote a personal letter to the then Archbishop of Canterbury of which he gave me a copy, which I have often re-read. My friend had been much disturbed by a resolution of the Lambeth Conference which suggested that the projected League of Nations was the beginning of a new world order—almost a first instalment of the Kingdom of Heaven upon earth. He earnestly warned the Archbishop against encouraging Christians to place such hopes in what was after all only a piece of political machinery. And he went farther: he warned him that, if such hopes were encouraged and if disillusionment then ensued, men would turn away to other and more fiery brands of religious enthusiasm.

Is not this exactly what has happened? Did not many Christians in the twenties fall into the temptation of seeking a sign from Heaven and of believing that they had found it in Geneva? And have we not witnessed in the thirties—not in this country alone—the stampede of a disappointed generation to other forms of this-worldly idealism, which a Lambeth Conference would be the first to discountenance?

*There shall no sign be given unto this generation.* There

comes back to me a speech by a back-bench member of the Oxford Conference of the Churches, in the Commission on International Relations: 'Give me a clear ringing message that I can take back to my congregation—a message that will make them feel that world-peace is on the way.' The same old demand for a sign ever renewed!

The third text has already been indicated in the title of this chapter.

*Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's.* This associates together two thoughts that will be a running undercurrent throughout our discussion.

Firstly, there is a technique of politics. Caesar has a business of his own, which requires knowledge, training, skill, a special quality of judgement. Politics—and more especially international politics—require more than goodwill and fine aspirations. It has its own expertise like medicine (which it perhaps most closely resembles in its methods—the body politic is a very helpful analogy)—or engineering or accountancy or any other whole-time occupation. When we say that a man is a good doctor or a good engineer we mean, first and foremost, that he is good at his own job—and there is virtue in that. It is not a misuse of the word 'good'. That, however, is not enough.

Secondly, the things of Caesar must be related to the things of God. Politics is not a closed department, no more than any other special activity.

What is the relationship between politics and spiritual values? Can we conceive of Caesar as a religious being? As having a soul of his own, expressing itself in his own work? And, if so, how? These questions are not answered in the Gospel narrative. The two duties, duty to God and duty to Caesar, are simply *juxtaposed*, and the question of their mutual relationship is just left open for our contemplation. Great teachers often prefer to leave large questions open: I think we are meant to understand, in this case, that there is no cut-and-dried answer.

Let us turn back now to the first text—reserving the consideration of our duty to Caesar till later.

‘God is Spirit.’ I will not attempt—it would be out of place in these pages—to enlarge on what these words imply in the inner life of the individual human being, whether he be simple-minded or sophisticated, a student or a plain man in the street. Spiritual values are not something to argue about. We do not reason ourselves into them. We apprehend them, or we do not apprehend them: and this apprehension, this reaching out, is a reaching out not of the intellect but of the soul.

These words, I know, like all words in this connexion, are very inadequate. What I want to bring out is the distinction between the intellect and the soul, the reasoning organ and the spiritual organ—and between the modes of operation of each—between what I have called apprehension and the process of arriving at an intellectual conclusion. To me as a man

and as a student of international relations this distinction is fundamental. To identify the spiritual with the intellectual is to mix two separate forms of experience. When we say 'God is Spirit' we mean much more than that God is intellect, though far be it from me to deny the latter proposition. Spiritual values, apprehended by the soul, are outside the boundaries and limitations of time. They are part of that Eternity which is all about us. They are both the *quality* and the *motion* of the Divine which permeates every moment of life, if we allow it to do so.

You will ask, What has this to do with the study of international affairs? My answer is that it has everything to do with it, because this quality and this motion—or, if you prefer the words, this experience and this dynamic—are the prerequisite of any form of inner order and any conception of life as a whole. Without such inner order, without such a conception of life as a whole, it is impossible for man to discover the road to the solution of any problem involving human relations, any problem in the realm of what is called social science, as opposed to natural science.

Much of the confusion of the present-day world is due to the fact that men and nations, and sometimes even Churches, bereft of inner order, have been seeking some form of outer order; or, in other words, trying to clean the outside of the cup, to whiten the sepulchre. I would go further and say that this search for outer order has been particularly active

and even feverish in the field of international relations. Those who have known Geneva best can tell you how many sick souls have taken refuge there. One might rephrase an old epigram and say that Geneva has been an opiate for the disorders of the spirit.

Now, if what has just been said about spiritual values is valid, it leads up to a practical conclusion. Spiritual values cannot be crushed into the narrow framework of any political or social theory. They either permeate the whole of life, or they are nothing. You cannot set bounds to a dynamic. Nor can you prescribe its course. Nor can you enclose it in an ideology or a doctrine or a programme. 'The wind bloweth where it listeth and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit.' Those words were addressed to an intellectual, a doctor in Israel.

We all recognize genius when we meet it, and we all know that there is no substitute for it—that no multiplication of second-rate minds can replace it; that, as has been wittily said, 'the small change for a Napoleon is not equal to a Napoleon'. Those who carry the dynamic of the spirit about with them have a quality akin to that of genius. They are unique. They cannot be labelled and classified. Still less can they be driven. They are under the compulsion of a higher power than that of any earthly committee. A community of such persons would enable the world to be remade. But the world as it now is cannot use such persons as

mere bricks, mere passive material for its own unregenerate structures, either in State or Church.

Let us now pass from the spiritual to the intellectual. Here we are no longer in the region of the undefinable. The process of thought is essentially social. Memory, the association of ideas, and the gradual shaping of this life of the mind into concepts and words have been means by which men have met their social needs from the beginning of human history.

Men's thinking has been largely—I will not say exclusively—concerned with the forces which relate man to society and with the ways and means for using these forces to meet men's needs in the material realm or in their relations with one another. Now, in modern times, the complexity of these forces has become very great and their interpenetration very intricate—so much so that men have come habitually to think of them as operating in a closed realm, and have come to study, and even sometimes almost to worship, them in and for themselves. In this way they have been led to ignore and eliminate the spiritual quality which alone could preserve the fundamental principle of order in the midst of all this complexity.

Thus we have the barren intellectualism which characterizes so much of the life of the so-called *élite* of to-day. Absence of a sense of spiritual values has left intellectuals with a feeling of emptiness and frustration. I suppose this is marked in all fields of study—no doubt my colleagues in the field of the natural sciences have noted it—but it has been particularly

marked in the field of international relations, where it has manifested itself in two related but distinguishable attitudes. Sometimes it has produced a dry kind of intellectual speculation, as in the Utopias—very dreary Utopias—of a certain school of international lawyers and of a certain school of Socialists. Sometimes, on the other hand, it has generated a mood of escapism. This has taken the most various forms, from the resuscitation of Positivism (the 'religion of humanity') to movements heavily charged with emotion, almost comparable to Salvationism—the League of Nations Faith, 'la mystique de la Société des Nations'—as used to be said in the hey-day of Aristide Briand's popularity in the late twenties.

It is hardly necessary to re-emphasize, what has already been implied, that no purely intellectual solutions can be of avail in dealing with *any* problem of social science. Least of all can purely intellectual solutions be helpful in the field of international relations: for there the human element is not less important, but more important, than in any other related field.

Yet how much of the current thinking on international relations is—or has been until quite recently—on the purely intellectual plane, cut off, on the one hand, from the life of the spirit and, on the other, from the realities of what is called the world—not the *only* realities, but realities all the same! Men islanded themselves on a little patch of intellectual soil, soil very carefully and even elegantly cultivated

according to the latest style of esoteric horticulture, and proceeded to make their own garden, to the style and pattern of which they vaguely but impatiently expected the rest of the world to conform. Egocentric internationalists we may call them, in spite of the curious incompatibility between the adjective and the noun. There comes into my mind in this connexion a conversation that I had recently with—or, it would be truer to say, a disquisition to which I recently listened by—a Canadian of this temper. If I repeat his argument, it is not in order to criticize its substance, but simply as a convenient example of this intellectualist method of approach. If I were to choose some similar line of argument current on this side of the Atlantic you would probably be less struck by the peculiarity of its method.

*First Argument.*

*Major Premiss:* I want World Order.

*Minor Premiss:* The British people have not done what they should in the cause of world order in recent years.

*Conclusion:* As a Canadian I have no more use for Great Britain.

*Second Argument.*

*Major Premiss:* An effective system of order for half the world is better than an ineffective system for the whole world.

*Minor Premiss:* The Pan-American Union can be made the means for an effective system of order in the western hemisphere.

*Conclusion:* Therefore Canada should sever her links with Great Britain and with Geneva and throw in her lot with the United States and the Pan-American Union.

This is intellectualist reasoning of the purest water. It is not only logical but lucid, not only lucid but sincere, not only sincere but dispassionate; for I am convinced that the conclusion arrived at was unpalatable to the reasoner, that it went against the grain of his feelings. But consider how narrow it is, how the reasoner has cramped himself—I would almost say mutilated himself. In the first place, he has made a clean cut between the abstract notion of world order and the realm of spiritual values. Is world order desirable, and if so, why? You cannot answer these questions without some conception of life as a whole, or, in other words, without some experience of inner order. And in the second place, he has cut himself off from the whole field of political experience; that is to say, from the raw material on the study of which he should have been forming his judgement. The scientific student of international affairs, reading this abstract argument with a blue pencil in his hand, would put a question-mark against almost every word; for instance:

1. What exactly is meant by World Order?
2. What exactly have the British people left undone that they should have done? If they had done it, would Canada have joined them in their action?

3. What is the Pan-American Union, and what are its powers?
4. What kind of people form the citizen bodies of the twenty-one American republics which make up this union?
5. What do other Canadians think of the policy proposed? And so on.

But here we are already deep in the things of Caesar, in the material and the technique of politics proper. To them, therefore, let us now turn.

*Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's.* What does this mean? Does it mean that there are two separate realms between which a great gulf is fixed, two realms each with its own standards—standards of conduct, but also of thought and feeling: on the one hand, the realm of God; on the other, the world—the world inhabited by sinful unregenerate men and vitiated, in the literal sense of that word, by a depraved social inheritance, by traditions, memories, attitudes, ingrained habits that are the offspring of ancient sin?

That is not merely a view that is intellectually tenable: it has actually been held by some Christians in almost every age—by monks, for instance, and by Lutherans. It is indeed not merely intellectually tenable: it is attractive. For it is so simple. Caesar and all his works belong to the unregenerate realm. The Christian's duty is to tolerate them, to put up with them, as best he can, whilst he is a sojourner in this world: above all, not to get to too

close grips with man, for he may be soiled in the process.

There comes into my mind a reminiscence of an experience of some nearly forty years ago, when, by accident, I was transported back into the Dark Ages. I was walking alone in the Apennines and had missed my way in a high forest. Night fell, and I saw a light in the near distance. It led me to a secluded monastery. I knocked. A hooded brother came to the door. I explained my plight and asked for a night's lodging. He retired to consult his Superior, then returned and invited me in. I found that I had stumbled upon a group of Christians, belonging to a very strict order, the Premonstratensians, who had literally cut themselves off from this world in order to prepare for the next: indeed, they expected the Day of Judgement to be upon them at any moment. They were totally ignorant of modern science, and when a train passed in the valley below they pointed to the light of the engine as a warning of the impending judgement. They believed that I had been sent to join them as a brand plucked from the burning, and when next morning I insisted on faring forth once more into the wicked world they presented me with a small medal, which I still possess, as a talisman which, reinforced by their prayers, might yet avail to save me from the wrath to come.

Here is the theory of the clean cut worked out to its logical conclusion. It is not only politics which are a sordid business soiled with sin: it is society as a whole—

the world of ordinary men and women: not simply this or that sore spot in our existing social organism, but Bank holidays and sherry parties and debating societies and cricket clubs, and a hundred and one other sources of what the ordinary man—even the habitual church-goer—takes for granted as innocent enjoyments.

What are we to say of this theory? I think the answer is that it *is right in its comprehensiveness, but wrong in its conclusion*. It is right in refusing to draw a line between politics and the rest of life, but wrong in concluding that the Christian's duty is to cut himself off from society as a whole.

Let me first emphasize the point on which the Premonstratensians were right—as I think, unimpeachably right; for it is an issue in which they are in conflict with a powerful tradition that has consciously influenced a great many earnest professing Christians, particularly in the Lutheran Communion, and has exercised an unconscious influence over a very great many more.

According to this view, the Christian is to stay in the world, to do his best to christianize it within the circle of his personal life, to be a good son, a good husband, a good father, a good employer, but to accept the fact that the sphere of the Christian ethic, of Christian standards, is sharply bounded by the walls of Caesar's palace; in other words, that it stops short when it reaches what we call public affairs. On this theory 'render to Caesar the things that are

Caesar's' is to be interpreted literally. The clean cut is not between the monastery and the world, but between private life and public life. It is not the world as a whole which is unregenerate: it is the specific, narrowly delimited sphere of Caesar; in a word, not Society, but the State.

One of the clearest exponents of this point of view—clear because he was so scrupulously honest—was Friedrich Naumann, a German Lutheran pastor who later went into politics and founded before the War what was called the Christian Social Party. Baron von Hügel in his book on *The German Soul*,<sup>1</sup> published during the War, gives some striking extracts from Naumann's writing on this theme. Naumann is tormented by the contradiction between the two duties imposed upon the Christian by the double injunction: Render to Caesar—render to God. He has watched the modern State at work, particularly in the realm of foreign affairs: as a patriotic German, he has approved of Caesar's achievements in that realm. Yet he is forced to the conclusion that they are incompatible with the Christian ethic.

What is his conclusion? Not that he should retire into a monastery, nor that he should remain a passive bystander, benefiting by the results of Caesar's work but not soiling his hands with it. Naumann was both too honest a man and too ardent a patriot to acquiesce in either of these solutions. There seemed to him

<sup>1</sup> *The German Soul in its Attitude towards Ethics and Christianity, the State and War* (London, Dent, 1916).

only one answer left. The Christian must accept the fact that, in this world, he is forced to practise a double morality—one morality for private life and another as a citizen.

'The more exclusively Jesus is preached,' he writes, 'the less does He help to form States; and where Christianity attempted to come forward as a constructive force, that is to form States, to dominate civilization, there it was farthest away from the Gospel of Jesus. Now this means, for our practical life, that we construct our house of the State, not with the cedars of Lebanon, but with the building-stones from the Roman Capitol. But in this house Jesus is still to-day to proclaim His Gospel as He did in the past in the Roman house. Hence we do not consult Jesus, when we are concerned with things which belong to the domain of the construction of the State and of Political Economy.'

And again, in another passage:

'How am I to say that Bismarck's preparations for the Schleswig-Holstein War were a service in the Kingdom of Jesus Christ? I cannot bring myself to do so. Yet all the same, I admire these preparations. It does not occur to me to lament them. Not every doing of one's duty is Christian. Bismarck did his duty, for his avocation was the cultivation of power. But such a duty and its fulfilment are not directly an imitation of Christ.'

Is not this in practice how many of us interpret our duty as citizens, however much we may profess the contrary? Is there not something to admire in Naumann's outspokenness and trenchancy, however untenable we may consider his conclusion?

For it is untenable. It is more: it is wicked: it opens the door to every kind of savagery, savagery indulged in under the cloak of religion, almost licensed by religion; for once Christianity has given Caesar marching orders to conduct affairs according to his own standards, what is there to restrain him? Why should he stop short of the uttermost bestiality? No, though we may pay tribute to Naumann's honesty, his theory does not hold water for an instant. The Christian cannot cut himself in two: he cannot set bounds to the working of the spirit within his soul. Of the two theories, that of the Premonstratensians and that of this school of Lutherans, the former is undoubtedly truer to the Christian ideal, for it holds fast to the Christian as a being with a single personality, a single soul, rather than as a divided being. Are we not living in a world largely inhabited by divided beings?

Can we solve the dilemma to which both monks and Lutherans have given what we feel to be unsatisfactory answers? How can we render to Caesar that which is his without ceasing to be Christians, without becoming mere part-time Christians? Before I attempt to state what I believe to be the true position in Christian theory I would like to digress for a moment to dwell upon a typical British attempt to grapple with this problem.

Burke is the vade-mecum of our politicians: far be it from me to say a word against him: he is far better bedside reading than Machiavelli or Hegel or *Mein*

*Kampf*. He had indeed a positive genius for framing helpful practical maxims—maxims which encourage the working politician to take the higher road rather than the lower. So we should not blame him for not pursuing the higher road right up to the mountain top, which he never professed to do: he would have considered this, in his own language, too metaphysical.

Well, Burke had been exercised with the problem as to whether Englishmen, in public affairs, ought to cut themselves in two, and he answered it emphatically in the negative. It is our duty, he said, in a familiar passage, 'to bring the dispositions that are lovely in private life into the service and conduct of the Commonwealth: so to be patriots as not to forget that we are gentlemen'.

Naumann's Caesar is no gentleman. We all realize that. But is it enough for Caesar to be a gentleman—an English gentleman? To ask that question is to answer it. For what does it mean to be a gentleman? Does it mean simply to conform to a standard set by convention: if so, how did the convention come into existence, and how is it maintained? Social standards do not come into existence automatically, by a spontaneous process of social evolution, whatever some of our materialistically minded social thinkers may say. They are the result of spiritual effort—the effort of individual human souls—in the past, the effort of men who tried so to be gentlemen as not to forget spiritual values.

So we are driven to the conclusion that, if public and private life are one, if the Christian is not to cut himself into two, then he is compelled to attempt to make spiritual values penetrate the whole of life, the whole of the world, the whole of Caesar's realm—the Palace and the Capitol as well as the city and the country-side.

‘But the world is very evil?’ Of course it is: that is just the problem—the unending problem of all human existence, a problem that cannot be solved, though it can be alleviated, by schemes for the Christianization of this or that element in modern society or of modern society as a whole. Nothing that the most well meaning of Caesars, or the most conscientious and best-equipped organization of Christians, can devise can eliminate the tension between the things of God and the things of Caesar, between the world of the spirit and the world of everyday life. That tension is a primary fact with which we have all of us to reckon all the time. No reform of the rules of the Stock Exchange, on lines laid down by an up-to-date Christian council, could make it easy for a stockbroker to be, in the truest sense of the word, a Christian. But, frankly, is it any easier for a clergyman or a professor? Every occupation, every field of social life, has its own techniques and its own temptations. We shall be studying in later chapters the special techniques and the special temptations and besetting pitfalls of the field of international relations. But let us, first of all, be clear that, even when

we have taken the fullest account of all this, when, for instance, our statesmen have succeeded in making the machinery of international co-operation as effective as it is ineffective to-day, it is idle to imagine that we shall have christianized the world, or this or that department of it, once and for all.

One of my most vivid recollections connected with this theme is a conversation to which I listened some twenty-five years ago between Baron von Hügel and the exponent—a very enlightened, public-spirited, and, I suppose, devout exponent—of a scheme for the christianization of a factory of which he was the proprietor—and on the proceeds of which he and his family were leading an estimable bourgeois existence. He enlarged upon the ventilation, the central heating, the welfare system, the part-time education, the dental clinic, the dining-room, the swimming-pool, the playing-fields—and all the time the old Baron was getting more and more impatient. Finally he broke in fiercely: 'You haven't begun to understand what Christianity is: Christianity is not refreshment bars and swimming-pools—it is a soul in the presence of God.' The conversation ended abruptly.

No, it is in the heart of man that the decisive issue lies. It is there that the combat is daily and hourly renewed. It is thence that emerges the impulse which determines whether the so-called solution is merely an intellectual device, for clever men to make use of this way or that—the Devil can quote the Covenant as glibly as he can quote the Bible—or, on the other

hand, an upward movement sustained by spiritual forces in the truest sense. It is possible to lift Caesar and his work on to a higher plane and to hold him there preparatory to a further upward effort. Social betterment is not a meaningless phrase. Institutions in which these improvements are, so to speak, deposited, can be a source of continuous inspiration and not mere empty shells, memorials to the aspirations of a dead past. In the sphere of international relations the notion of World Order can hold a meaning for us, and, more than a meaning, a promise. But we shall fail utterly in all that we undertake—whether at home or abroad, whether in politics or in the mission field—unless we realize all the time that Caesar cannot move a single step upwards by his own unaided exertions. If Caesar is to take his share in doing God's work on earth, he must know himself all the time to be an unworthy servant. And this is as true of the Church, or the Churches, as it is of the State. God is Spirit: and those that try to do His work must labour in spirit and in truth.

## II

### *THE SPECIAL CHARACTERISTICS OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS*

WE have now to turn from public affairs in general—the things of Caesar, taken as a whole—to one special department of them—international politics or, as they are for most of us, foreign affairs. We shall be dealing in this chapter with the special characteristics of foreign affairs, leaving until later the consideration of special difficulties arising out of the attempt to apply spiritual values to this particular department of Caesar's work. Much of what follows may seem elementary, but it is necessary in order to place the subject in perspective. Perhaps the commonest mistake of amateurs is inability, or unwillingness, to approach international problems with a sense of proportion.

The first characteristic of foreign affairs is that they are foreign; that is to say, removed from the normal experience of the citizen—removed, generally speaking, from his personal experience in any form, but practically always from his normal experience. It is not sufficiently realized what a problem this lack of normal personal experience in foreign affairs creates for modern democracy. Democracy is a very illogical form of government; for it means the handing over of the final decision in complicated public affairs—and all public affairs nowadays are complicated—to people who know very little about them. But where

democracy has succeeded—and there are about a dozen fairly successful democracies in the world—it is because, though the ordinary citizen does not know all the details of the issues that he is deciding, he has a fairly good inkling, from his own experience, of the kind of problem that is involved. The result is that he has a reasonable confidence in his ability to pass judgement on it; and those whose business it is to master the details—ministers, government officials and others, the so-called experts—are reasonably content, or at least, not unduly afraid, to leave the broad decision to the popular judgement. In other words, the strength of democracy does not lie in the knowledge of the common man, but in his judgement—in what is called his common sense.

Moreover, this judgement has, in all successful democracies, been trained and refined by apprenticeship in the form of actual experience of public affairs, or semi-public affairs, on a scale more limited than that of the country as a whole. There are few men voters, and perhaps not an overwhelming proportion of women voters, who have not at some time or another sat on a committee; and those whom they have encountered and been forced to get on to terms with on these committees—on local government bodies, in co-operative societies, trade unions, professional associations, and so on—are the same kind of people as are involved in the issues of national politics, on their domestic side—land-owners, professional men, workmen in various occupations, shopkeepers, manu-

facturers, bankers, sportsmen, practically all of them British. The result is that, on any general domestic issue, the elector has some element of personal experience to which he can relate his consideration of the particular problem: he does not make up his mind because he once met a miner or a shipowner or a licensed victualler in the train and had a dispute with him about opening the window—as may have happened with the only Frenchman or the only Italian an Englishman has encountered, or with the first, the one who makes an indelible impression.

Now, in foreign affairs, this element of normal personal experience, and the quality of sound, steady judgement based upon it, are almost entirely lacking: and in their absence the ordinary citizen is at a great disadvantage—all the greater when he is not conscious of it. Foreign affairs are necessarily unreal to him. He sees them through a glass darkly; and in this half-light his mind is open to every variety of misconception, from romantic enthusiasm to an equally romantic despair, to sentimentalism and ‘wishful thinking’, to the craze for panaceas, and, last but not least, to the insidious onslaughts of propaganda—the kind of propaganda which is powerless in domestic issues because it feeds on ignorance.

This deficiency in the quality of public opinion on foreign affairs is perhaps the most serious of the many serious problems which democracy has to face to-day. It is intensified by another factor, the wide range which foreign affairs cover in the modern State. The

extensive ramifications of foreign affairs are very little realized by the ordinary citizen. A single instance must suffice to illustrate this. One of the causes which has contributed to ill feeling against us in post-War Italy, as elsewhere, dates from the winter of 1919-20. At that time there was an acute shortage of coal, which was felt with particular severity in that country, devoid as it is of coal resources. The French coal-mines were still largely out of action. The coal-fields of Teschen and Upper Silesia were suffering from disturbed political conditions, and on the top of all this there was a miners' strike in the United States. The result was to place the British coal industry in an unusually favourable position for charging high prices to Italian and other continental European consumers. This it forthwith proceeded to do, diplomatic pressure being even exerted at Rome to prevent concerted action by Italian buyers of coal. But the 'enormous profits' thus accruing—the words are those of the President of the Board of Trade of the day—were not left to be enjoyed by the coal industry alone. The whole country shared in the windfall and consequent orgy of profiteering. An Act was passed through Parliament providing for a reduction of 10s. in the price of coal for domestic consumers, which had been fixed under the wartime system of control still persisting at that time. And at this juncture, while British householders were warming themselves thus economically at their fire-sides, the Archbishop of Canterbury issued an appeal

to all the bishops of the Anglican communion at home and abroad to set aside Holy Innocents' Day for special services of intercession for the victims of the distress on the Continent.

No doubt neither the Archbishop nor the general public realized that the President of the Board of Trade was at that time responsible for the conduct of an important part of our 'foreign affairs'. Probably Sir Auckland Geddes himself never appreciated his responsibilities as one of our Foreign Ministers or the way in which he was departing from standards of good neighbourliness to which he was probably in principle more than willing to subscribe. The fact is that in this, as in innumerable other cases, the public, and even men in responsible positions, were unable to understand the wider bearings of what to the superficial observer looked like a purely domestic policy. Thus it comes about that, in the world as it now is, in all its complexity and interdependence, democracies are constantly at cross-purposes, because they lack the knowledge, and too often also the will, to follow their declared policies through to their ultimate consequences.

It is, of course, true that on any given issue, relating to any given country, there is, in England, always a small number of persons who do know the situation from personal experience—the so-called experts. But they do not solve the problem of the democratic control of foreign affairs. Indeed, in a sense, they aggravate it, for an expert is emphatically not a

person to whom to go for a broad, general decision. His function is to supply the facts on which others who stand farther back from the picture form their own broad, general decision. Experts are essential to the working of democracy; but, in domestic affairs, we keep them in their place by our general knowledge of the nature and background of the problems involved. In foreign affairs this check does not exist; and so we are in perpetual danger of oscillating between wholesale acceptance of expert advice or an equally wholesale rejection.

Moreover, there are many different kinds of experts or professed experts, and it needs some skill to distinguish between them. There are experts who represent a special economic interest—perfectly respectable in itself, but necessarily limited by the business outlook. Others, such as missionaries, represent a broader and more idealistic attitude. But even missionaries may have their limitations. Then there is the type of expert for whom a particular country has become something like a pet or a protégé. Then there is perhaps the most dangerous type of expert, or pseudo-expert, amongst them all—the tourist, when he is not a trained social observer, especially when he travels in a group. I am reminded of the member of a tour who had been put up at a guest house in Italy which happened to be a nobleman's palace with a marble staircase. He complained that his party had been lodged in a house where there was not even a carpet on the stairs.

There is another variety of experts—the people who have social relations with a particular foreign country. They are the devotees of what may be called country-house internationalism—a modern term of the old dynastic internationalism which can be very unfair and even dangerous in its operations. There have been cases, for instance, in central and eastern Europe in which governments not drawn from the 'right' social class have been put at a serious disadvantage in their diplomatic dealings. Aristocracy, even pseudo-aristocracy, is a distinct asset under the existing conditions of diplomacy. The same process might, of course, occur in the opposite sense: a nation might find its inherited class-structure a liability in its foreign affairs. But, whatever their principles, proletarians have not yet mastered, to the same extent, the technique of international intercourse: so that this is a future rather than a present peril.

At this point it is necessary to put in a warning against the tendency to allow judgements on international affairs to be influenced by what may be called considerations of psychological affinity—by likes, or possibly dislikes. One often hears remarks, by good democrats and worthy well-meaning citizens, in the course of a discussion on some international issue, to the effect that such-and-such a nation deserves support because of its manners or its sense of humour or its cleanliness or its love of sport, or its indulgence in some other innocent pastime or foible. Such arguments are, in the strictest sense of the word,

unjust. Considerations of this kind do not constitute a fair basis for the formation of a political judgement. No judge would allow himself to be influenced by such irrelevances. To attach importance to them is to discriminate unconsciously in favour of the nations who either are or appear to be most like ourselves. If we are to be scrupulously fair, we should, on the contrary, make a special effort to appreciate the point of view of those who are least like ourselves. Nothing worse could happen to the world than that its peoples should be ranged in political groups according to mere likes and dislikes—in *blocs* or alliances based on psychological affinity. We shall come back to this question when we deal with the subject of race relations.

This brings us to the second main characteristic of foreign affairs—what may be called their altogetherness or, if a Latin word is preferred, their simultaneity. Every Foreign Minister, or at least every Foreign Minister of a Great Power, is concerned with all the world all the time: and of no Foreign Minister is this truer than of our own. Every day telegrams reach the Foreign Office from the four corners of the world. Now, the business of a British Foreign Minister and of a British Cabinet is to keep the whole world in mind in every decision of policy—to remember what Italians are likely to think about a coal policy, or Frenchmen about a reparations policy, or Americans about a Hoare-Laval agreement, or Indians about a policy in the Far East, or Scandinavians, Belgians,

and Dutchmen about a policy in central Europe. It may be urged against this that, if international politics are really so intricate, to attempt to master their complications is to paralyse all power of decision. This is undoubtedly a very real difficulty which some rulers, the Dictators, for example, overcome by driving straight ahead, regardless of consequences. But that involves a still greater danger. It was this kind of policy on the part of the German High Command in January 1917 which brought the United States into the World War.

No, we must face the fact that a modern Foreign Secretary requires a combination of qualities rarely found united. He must be able to see all sides of a question—to view it, as it were, from the north, south, east, and west as well as from London, and to view it in its context of general policy; and he must be able also to make up his mind to act—and to act at the right moment.

There is another factor which should be borne in mind in this connexion. The issues and the countries or regions about which there is little or nothing in the news at any given moment may be, and often are, as important as those figuring in the headlines. The largest part of an iceberg is out of sight. The most significant events are often those which cause little or no stir. It may well be that the historian of the future, surveying the 1930's, will pick out as the most important development in world affairs during that time the constitutional evolution of India.

Another example may be taken from a very different field. Considerations of national defence are, or should be, in the mind of every government all the time. Yet they are not ordinarily trumpeted on the housetops. It is only recently, for instance, that the man in the street has come to recognize the strategic importance of the Mediterranean. Yet the Mediterranean and the problems which it involves, problems of our relations with all the peoples of the Mediterranean seaboard from Spain to Turkey and Egypt, have been with us for centuries, and should be a constant element in our thinking on problems of the British Commonwealth. We cannot evade them. The same applies to the Indian Ocean, which has not yet been promoted to the headlines.

To concentrate attention, as beginners in the study of international affairs so often do, on issues that are exciting momentary attention, the 'sore spots' on the map, is a serious mistake in method. The best kind of policy, both at home and in foreign affairs, is a preventive policy—a policy that takes time by the forelock and deals with problems before they are acute. Perhaps the greatest mistake of successive British governments in the post-War period has been to put aside preventive policies in order to try to deal with issues on which there was loud popular clamour. We ought, for instance, to have followed up the policy of the Washington Conference of 1922 by a forward policy in China in association with the United States. Why did we not do so? Look back at the newspaper

files of the twenties, and you will see that our statesmen were busying themselves, in response to the demands of public opinion, with what seemed to be—but were not—more urgent things.

In the same way, we should have taken up the economic problems arising out of the increased importance of raw materials in international politics. We did not do so till 1935, when it was too late. Why not? Largely because, in response to a demand from public opinion, our statesmen were busy with the limitation of armaments. As a matter of fact, raw materials are one of the most important elements in the problem of armaments. But the public, including the Churches, did not understand this. It is indeed only just beginning to understand it to-day.

This brings us to another feature of foreign affairs, the time-lag—the interval that elapses in a democracy before voters awaken to the reality of a foreign situation. It was once calculated that the average interval between the report of a Royal Commission and the enactment of the legislation recommended by it was nineteen years. This is almost exactly the time that it took the people of this island to realize the implications of air power for the security of our home.

This is perhaps an extreme instance: but to go through the history of the last twenty years is to find instance after instance on which the electorate awoke to the real nature of a problem only after it was too late to deal with it in the way in which it would have

wished to do if it had fully understood it at the time.

This process of waking up too late is a virtual negation of democracy, for it deprives it of its initiative and condemns it to long periods of helplessness. In our recent history one can watch its effects from the general election of December 1918 right down to the Munich Agreement. This is, moreover, a particularly serious problem for us in the British Commonwealth, because in the case of public opinion in the Dominions the time-lag, at least as regards European issues, is even longer than in this country. Many times in the last twenty years when the Government in London has fortified its case by referring to the views of this or that Dominion that assent was, in fact, more or less ill informed.

If any reader of these lines is inclined to interpret them as a criticism of the Dominions, let him ask himself whether he or she has a clear and informed opinion about problems which primarily concern individual Dominions—such, for instance, as the defence policy of Australia or New Zealand.

We come now to a fourth point. Foreign affairs are external affairs: that is to say, outside our jurisdiction. We are not free to deal with them as we wish. We need to persuade other governments to adopt the course of action that we favour. As a result, the technique of foreign policy is quite different from the technique of domestic policy. In the sphere of domestic policy the Cabinet resembles the centurion. It can say 'Go', or

rather sign a decision on a sheet of paper, and the order is executed. But in foreign affairs no government can command. It can only negotiate. When it is dealing with weaker Powers it can no doubt put pressure of various kinds behind the negotiation: but, of course, our principal problems are with Powers relatively immune to pressure of that kind.

Now, the general public is still insufficiently conscious of the fact that the Government and the House of Commons are not free to carry out the policy which they would like to see adopted. It is still very common, especially at election time, to read speeches containing either promises to carry out a certain policy or reproaches against the government of the day for not having carried it out, when, for any one knowing the circumstances, conditions outside this country make such a policy quite impracticable.

This is one of the standing drawbacks resulting from the controversial discussion of foreign affairs: and it is intensified by the fact that very often such reproaches cannot be answered without adding to the embitterment of the international situation. It is no doubt very galling to the British electorate not to be able to have its way in external affairs as it is accustomed to have its way in domestic affairs and as in the spacious days of Queen Victoria, when Palmerston launched his thunderbolts, we very often—though by no means always—had in foreign affairs also. It is galling, but we must learn to put up with it and, above all, to avoid using strong language as a

substitute for strong action—a temptation to which both branches of the English-speaking world are particularly prone.

In saying this I do not wish to criticize the public expression of moral indignation, which is, in certain circumstances, a duty. But let us realize that moral indignation, by itself, however healthy and satisfying, is not enough. It can and should be followed up by action, whether public or private. Otherwise it is of no benefit either to the victim of injustice or to the temporarily indignant person.

We come now to a fifth point which is closely related to what has been said above about simultaneity—the unequal state of development of the peoples of the world. There are not only a great many different peoples in the world, but they are also at many different stages of social and political development—from the aborigines of Australia to the mature democracies of north-western Europe. The problems resulting from the coexistence of, and interaction between, what we call advanced and primitive societies do not figure very prominently in the field of foreign policy. That is because most of the primitive peoples are in colonies ruled by some stronger Power, and their problems are, therefore, strictly speaking, domestic problems. We will deal with these later. The particular inequality which concerns us now is the inequality of power—and the inequality of power, not between peoples but between States. It is a fact of international politics—it is indeed perhaps the

outstanding fact—that there are a small number of Great Powers and a large number, some fifty or more, of other independent States which are not Great Powers and whose citizens are, all the time, acutely conscious of this. As so stated, this is familiar enough, but we do not always realize its consequences. The chief of these is that the smaller Powers—who are sometimes formally designated ‘Powers with limited interests’—tend to feel little or no responsibility for dealing with general international problems. Practically speaking, the whole responsibility for them is thrown on the shoulders of the Great Powers. This has been so for generations—and things have not changed in this respect since the Great War.

Now, as the world is to-day, the burden of dealing with world problems must fall on some government or governments somewhere. The modern world is, in many respects, interdependent, and its problems cannot be satisfactorily dealt with by sixty governments pursuing policies in mutual isolation. The nineteenth century coped with this problem by the device of what was known as the Concert of Europe: economic problems, of course, were much simpler during the greater part of that time. In the twenties an attempt was made to cope with it by means of the League of Nations, of which both the Great and the smaller Powers were members. But, in practice, this meant and could only mean, in the prevailing outlook of the smaller Powers, co-operation between the Great Powers inside the new system.

It is common to hear it said to-day that the League has broken down and that we have gone back to power politics. This is a misleading half-truth. It is true if it means that an attempt was made at Geneva to create conditions for the use of power in a co-operative and responsible spirit, and that it is now being used by some Great Powers in a self-regarding and irresponsible spirit. But it is false if it suggests that the members of the League of Nations had abjured the use of power, or that the Covenant obliged them to do so. It is no more possible to renounce the use of power in politics than it is to renounce the use of money, or some other means of exchange, in economic activity. Power is the currency of politics. Even a traffic policeman exercises power. Potentially, he has the whole army and navy behind him. The real distinction is not between power and no power, but between the right and the wrong use of power—or, if you like, between power-politics and responsibility-politics. I never yet met a Swede or a Swiss who wished to see Britain powerless. Those who talk lightly about Britain abandoning her position as a Great Power little know what reaction such a policy would evoke among the weaker peoples.

Ought these not to bear their part of this burden of responsibility? No doubt they should, and it is permissible to hope, and even to believe, that some day—perhaps before very long—they will. But in the meantime we must face the fact that there is a glaring

unreality about the conventional framework of international relations. There are not sixty equal and independent States. There are many degrees of independence. The United States is more independent than Panama or Cuba, Great Britain is more independent than Portugal, Egypt, or Iraq.

Every one who reflects for one instant knows this. But it is wounding to say so publicly, and this reticence has led to a great deal of unnecessary make-believe. Undoubtedly, the fact that the League of Nations had to be established within the traditional framework of the so-called Family of Nations—nations strong and weak, responsible and irresponsible, politically mature and politically immature, all brought in together seemingly on equal terms—was an important factor in its enfeeblement, one might even say, its corruption. It also accounts for the inherent weakness of what is called International Law—that is, the rules which are supposed to regulate the conduct towards one another of these unequal members of the so-called Family of States. I cannot pursue this subject farther, but it is noticeable that even archbishops have sometimes recently made references to International Law which did not seem fully to take these considerations into account.

We come now to a sixth and last general condition to be borne in mind—the most general of all—the political backwardness of mankind. The art of government, so far as modern conditions are concerned, is in its infancy. Compare it, for instance, with the art

of medicine. Compare a dictionary of medicine with a dictionary of politics, if you can find one. Political scientists have not even arrived at an agreed terminology. Common men, and even professors, are still in a state of confusion as to the true meaning of terms like nation, liberty, democracy, self-determination. Consider another instance of political backwardness, this time from the realm of political practice. How many countries are there in which public administration is carried on on sound principles—in which, for instance, Civil Servants gain their appointments by merit rather than by favour, in which there is what we call a Civil Service standard or morale? Very few—certainly a small minority of the membership of the League of Nations. How many of the people who talk glibly about international administration realize this? Our own system of government, central and local, is unsatisfactory enough, yet it is one of the best in the world. We are a very, very long way off from a true World Commonwealth. Indeed, the leading peoples are not yet agreed as to the objective at which governments should be aiming, whether it should be the increase of the power of the State or of the welfare of the people; and until there is agreement on that point, any real or whole-hearted co-operation between the holders of these opposing views is impossible. It is no use trying to mask this unpleasant fact by vague hopes that all will be well when this or that country has been brought to Geneva. There is not, and never has been, any magic at Geneva which can transform

national attitudes. All such transformations can only take place within the nations themselves.

Moreover, not only is the political state of the world backward, it is also unjust. A large part of mankind is living under political conditions which cannot be defended on any abstract principles of justice. To use a current and much abused phrase, the *status quo* is unjust.

There are two crying conditions of injustice to which we have become so accustomed that we fail to realize their incidence upon those who suffer from them. One is the standing relationship between the white and the non-white peoples—an unequal relationship dating roughly from the application of gunpowder to the art of war. The other is the standing relationship in most countries between the rich and the poor. (This last is in the field of domestic politics and does not strictly concern us, but to bear it in mind may sharpen our sense of the inequalities in the international sphere.) Sometimes the two inequalities can be observed side by side—white and non-white—very rich and very poor—a most unsatisfactory *status quo*, to put it mildly.

What are we going to do about it? Examine into its causes and seek unflinchingly for real remedies, enduring remedies that can be applied now, but require generations of effort to attain their full results.

It is all the more necessary to lay emphasis on these permanent conditions of injustice because in so many current discussions on international relations it is

assumed that what is unjust in the *status quo* can be remedied with comparative ease—by shifting a few boundary marks. Indeed, the term *status quo* has become associated in the popular mind with the Peace Treaties of 1919. It would be far better and, I think one can say without offence, far more Christian, if we associated it with the voyages of Vasco da Gama and Sir John Hawkins. As a matter of fact, as every serious student of Europe knows, the map of post-War Europe was a far juster map than that of 1914. The restoration of Poland is by itself sufficient evidence of this. But this is not the place in which to pursue this subject. All that it is desired to emphasize here is that it is a serious mistake, and indeed a grave injustice, to confine an interest in the inequity of the *status quo* to particular nations and a particular region. We must think of it in terms of the whole world and of all its peoples. Unless we do that, we shall be in grave danger of creating two new injustices for every one we sweep away.

Is there any royal road to establishing conditions of greater justice in the world? Undoubtedly there is. It is the same road as that which we traversed and are still traversing in this country in order to secure better living conditions for the mass of our people—the road of constitutional development. The first milestone on that road is the establishment of order. Order precedes justice. You cannot have justice without order. You cannot have law without order. You may have judges and courts, but their voice will not be

heard in the tempest of civil strife. For that reason, the first duty of all those of us—citizens of politically advanced communities—who are trying to think in terms of the world as a whole is to press upon our governments and our fellow citizens their responsibility for establishing and maintaining a condition of order in the world, and the need for arriving at a common policy to this end between the leading governments. We will return to this subject later. At this stage let me just make one further observation. A policy directed towards order is an essentially democratic policy, in that it provides a solution for the problem discussed earlier in this chapter—the problem of how to enable the common man to bring his judgement to bear on the complex detailed issues of international politics. Every man or woman can understand the difference between order and violence—can understand that violent policies are anti-social and make life intolerable for every one in every country and in every walk of life, if only because they create uncertainty. The renunciation of violent policies by our own government and the restraining by common action of violent policies by other governments—here is a simple foreign policy on which the democratic peoples ought to be able to frame an enduring association.

Why have they not done so in the last twenty years? Largely because they have been misled by the hope of short-cuts, of remedies that would require less effort, by the perpetual lure of something for

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nothing. It is at least one consolation in the grave times that we are passing through that it has forced us to face the fundamental conditions and difficulties in world affairs and to abandon the idle dream that the tension between the things of Caesar and the things of God can be relieved by some simple and mechanical means involving little or no effort, either physical, intellectual, or spiritual, on our own part.

### III

#### *SEEKING FOR A SIGN*

**I**N the last chapter we were looking at the world from England—an England for whom happenings beyond our shores are foreign or, at the very least, external, and trying to understand the difficulties of a British Foreign Secretary and a British Cabinet. We were closeted, so to speak, in Caesar's office—our British Caesar's office. We now return to the main theme, to various aspects of which the remaining chapters will be devoted—the relation between spiritual values and world affairs, between the things of God and this particular department of the things of Caesar.

Let us begin by asking ourselves what should be the attitude of a British citizen who is a Christian in more than name towards the conduct of foreign affairs. I have already partly answered my question by the way in which I have put it. I have said 'What should be the *attitude*?—not 'What should be the policy, or the programme, or the opinions?' In other words, the relation between religion and foreign affairs, or, for the matter of that, any branch of public affairs, can never be laid down within the four corners of a policy or a programme.

I am choosing my words here carefully. I do not say that there are not issues on which our religion has a direct bearing on our political opinions and action.

Such issues do arise from time to time. One might go farther and say that such issues should be aroused from time to time. For instance, it is hard to see how one hundred and fifty years ago, any professing Christian, any one repeating daily the words *Our Father*, could have more than one opinion about the continuance of the slave trade and of slavery under the British flag. But even on such an issue as that, on which a great and beneficent reform was achieved largely by the mobilization of the religious sentiment of the country—or of part of the country—there is room for many different opinions on questions which to the outsider may seem to be details, but the settling of which may make all the difference to the future welfare of the human beings concerned—such matters as the care of the released slaves, their training for citizenship and economic independence, the compensation to be paid to their former masters and so on.

In other words, though religion may supply the dynamic for such a reform, it cannot carry it through without making use of Caesar's technique. Religion can indicate the direction. It cannot, by itself and without expert knowledge, frame the policy.

Moreover, religion cannot ignore the element of time and opportunity in public affairs. We are no doubt all agreed, in the light of after events, that the slavery question was ripe for settlement at the end of the eighteenth century—and perhaps, if British Christians had been sufficiently courageous, several generations earlier. But was it ripe for solution in the days of

St. Paul? Was it his duty, his conscientious duty, as it was certainly that of Wilberforce, to lead an anti-slavery crusade?

This raises the whole issue, which was touched on in the first chapter, of the relation between the Christian and the world. My answer, on this specific issue, would be that St. Paul could justifiably be criticized for social blindness if he had failed to recognize that the legal condition of slavery was fundamentally incompatible with the Christian Gospel—that he did recognize this incompatibility I think we can detect in his references to the subject—but that the world would have been the poorer if he had abandoned his general apostolate in order to devote himself to this one particular social problem.

Moreover, I would not go so far as to say that no one who is socially blind can be a good Christian. That would be to cast a stone at the Premonstratensians—and I do not feel like going so far as that. One can be a convinced democrat without imputing moral obliquity to those who conceive their Christian duty on quite other lines. After all, a democrat's sense of public duty is only *his* application of the command to do one's duty to one's neighbour—or rather, his application of one side of that command. It is as dangerous to think that the right attitude to public affairs is enshrined within the four corners of a programme of political democracy as to confine it within those of any other programme or policy. When a Christian is exercising his mind and conscience

on public affairs, *nothing* can relieve him of the duty—very often a tedious and toilsome duty—of looking behind broad principles to the details of the case in hand. It is *never* right in politics to neglect the concrete points at issue and to fall back on general principles.

It is never right, for the simple reason that there are no *ultimate* principles in politics. What we call, for convenience, political principles are only rough generalizations from experience, liable to modification, even sometimes to reversal, when circumstances themselves change. We have a name for the man who sticks to a political principle, whilst ignoring, or even defying, attendant circumstances. We call him a doctrinaire: and some of the most trenchant and not the least Christian pages in our political literature are in condemnation of the doctrinaire. Here are two—one from Oliver Cromwell and the other from Burke.

'It is not enough for us to propose good things [said Cromwell, to a group of soldiers who had presented him with a far-reaching scheme of political reform], but it behoves honest men and Christians (that really will approve themselves so before God and men) to see whether or no . . . taking all things into consideration, they may honestly endeavour and attempt that that is fairly and plausibly proposed. For my part I know nothing that we are to consider first but *that*, before we would come to debate the evil or good of this paper, or to add to it, or to subtract from it. And . . . I am confident (if your hearts be upright, as ours are—and

God will be judge between us) you do not bring this paper with peremptoriness of mind, but to receive amendments, to have anything taken from it that may be made apparent by clear reason to be inconvenient or dishonest.'<sup>1</sup>

And here is Burke, addressing a member of the French National Assembly of 1791:

'Permit me to say that, if I were as confident as I ought to be diffident in my own loose general ideas, I should never venture to broach them, if but at twenty leagues' distance from the centre of your affairs. I must see with my own eyes, I must, in a manner, touch with my own hands, not only the fixed but the momentary circumstances, before I could venture to suggest any political project whatsoever. I must know the power and disposition to accept, to execute, to persevere. I must see all the aids and all the obstacles. I must see the means of correcting the plan where corrections would be wanted. I must see the things; I must see the men. Without a concurrence and adaptation of these to the design, the very best speculative projects might become not only useless but mischievous. Plans must be made for men. We cannot think of making men and binding Nature to our designs. People at a distance must judge ill of men. They do not always answer to their reputation when you approach them. Nay, the perspective varies, and shows them quite otherwise than you thought them. At a distance, if one judge uncertainly of men, one must judge worse of *opportunities*, which continually vary their shapes and colours and pass away like clouds. The Eastern politicians never do anything without the

<sup>1</sup> *Puritanism and Liberty*, being the Army Debates from the Clarke manuscripts (London, 1938), pp. 8-9. The 'Paper' is to be found on pp. 443-5).

opinion of the astrologers on the *fortunate moment*. They are in the right, if they can do no better; for the opinion of fortune is something towards commencing it. Statesmen of a more judicious prescience look for the fortunate moment too; but they seek it, not in the conjunctions and oppositions of planets, but in the conjunctions and oppositions of men and things. These form their almanac.<sup>1</sup>

That is English common sense or worldly wisdom or political technique, or whatever else it may be called, as contrasted with doctrinairism, or Jacobinism, or Bolshevism, or Totalitarianism, or any other variety of political orthodoxy.

Of course it carries with it its own dangers. It can very easily become an excuse for inertia and self-complacency and cynicism and the many other forms of that intellectual laziness to which too many of us in this country are addicted. Reluctance to swallow general ideas wholesale should not lead us to have no use for them at all. But is not the alternative method, the method of holding fast to a fixed body of Christian political principles, to a Christian political programme, in all conditions and circumstances, very much more dangerous?

It is a salutary, if painful, discipline, for any one who feels inclined to favour the organization of political opinion on Christian lines, to study the record of some of the political parties the founders of which have yielded to this temptation, and to consider the kind of issue with which such parties tend to become associated. He will discover that the

<sup>1</sup> World's Classics edition of Burke's *Works*, iv. 312-13.

appellation of Christian is not seldom adopted as a watchword for the promotion of some special local variety of intolerance—adopted, sometimes defiantly, sometimes shamefacedly, in order to give such a policy, and the prejudice behind it, an appearance of respectability and its opponents a corresponding appearance of disreputability. It should not be forgotten that even Pastor Naumann, whose outspoken repudiation of Christian standards in foreign affairs was cited in the first chapter, sat in the pre-War German Reichstag as a Christian Socialist, the leader of the group of that name.

If we are counting our blessings as British citizens, there is one that we ought never to forget—namely, that our political divisions have for generations past not been on religious lines. We have not in recent times had in this country anything corresponding to the clerical parties with which we are familiar on the Continent, not merely in pre-Hitlerian Germany but in countries like Belgium—not to speak of Spain; nor have we had the deep-seated political cleavage, such as has existed in the political life of France since the eighteenth century, between religion and rationalism, between the claims of the spiritual life and the claims of intellectual integrity. That battle, which we all of us have to fight, is fought out in this country within the privacy of our own breasts.

Every now and then, indeed, in some particular secondary issue the claims of religion are invoked,

and I think it is not going too far to say that, in almost every case, the effect of this is to confuse the issue and to distort judgement.

The most striking instance of this in recent times in this country is the way in which the so-called religious issue confused the judgement of the House of Commons and the electorate in the struggle over the Education Bill of 1902. Looking back, we can see to-day that the Act which issued from that Bill is a landmark in the social history of our country. Yet it was passed into law by a Conservative Government against the opposition of the entire Liberal Party, with the single exception of Mr. R. B. Haldane, as he then was. This singular parliamentary situation came about owing to the fact that an interdenominational battle between Church and Chapel was going on in the foreground, concerning what was by far the less important aspect of the Bill, while, under cover of these alarms and excursions, the constructive and indeed revolutionary part of it slipped through, its significance unrealized, except by a few experts, of whom one of the most active was Mr. Sidney Webb. This 'disinterested Machiavellian', as Halévy calls him, felt no discomfort about using the Church of England to promote his socialistic aims, since, in his detached way, he had always had rather a foible for denominational education, which was in the tradition of French St. Simonian Socialism, whilst the clamour of the Free Church Council, with its appeals to Pym and Hampden, left his bureaucratic soul unmoved.

There is a delicate irony about this episode which was certainly not lost on Mr. Balfour (as he then was) when he was championing the Bill in the House of Commons, and which ought not to be lost on us as we see it in retrospect.

Before we leave this subject it is relevant to remark that, so far as my knowledge goes, the chaplains who during the War found themselves dealing in their gravest hours with the ex-pupils of these two so much debated types of school did not detect any marked difference between their respective alumni—a rather sobering reflection for the surviving controversialists of 1902.

I have given this as an instance of the use of religious sentiment in a secondary issue—and so it is if we confine it to the issue between what used to be called Board Schools and Voluntary Schools and are now called Provided Schools and Non-provided Schools. But one can detect the so-called religious issue creeping into our political life in other matters that are of greater importance, some of them in the domain of foreign affairs.

Take the case of Spain. I do not wish here to express any opinion on the issues which have been at stake in that unhappy country; but I do say emphatically that it is a matter of regret, and, more than of regret, of bad omen, that the facts of the Spanish situation in its different phases since 1936 should have been presented differently to different sections of our public opinion and that this cleavage should

have corresponded, partly at any rate, to lines of religious division.

One of the strong points of our British democracy has hitherto been its homogeneity: it is because we are so much at one on political fundamentals—the fundamentals of liberty—that, as Lord Balfour has put it, we can safely afford to bicker on details.<sup>1</sup> But that bickering on details has always hitherto been carried on in a spirit of intellectual give-and-take, within what the philosophers call the same universe of discourse. It is a new experience in this country to encounter people—one's fellow citizens—with whom it is impossible to discuss a given issue because they have their own private or sectarian version of the facts, and to discover that their minds are closed not only to argument but even to further elucidation of the subject—closed because their information is derived from sources which have, for them, a religious or, perhaps I should add, an ideological sanction.

This is the introduction into British politics of a continental habit of mind. There is much that we can take over from the Continent to our great advantage—not least in the domain of intellectual life. But let us beware of introducing into this country, in any form, the germ which has been responsible for so many generations of sterile controversy between clericals and anti-clericals from the banks of the Seine to those of the Danube and the Vistula. It may surprise our

<sup>1</sup> Introduction to the World's Classics edition of Bagehot's *The English Constitution*, p. xxiv.

continental friends that we should number amongst our ecclesiastics a Red Bishop and a dyed-in-the-wool Conservative Dean—or is it the other way round? But is it not very much better that our churchmen, whether ecclesiastical or lay, should feel themselves free to form their opinions like every other member of the community and should not be dragooned into a single political camp? A few eccentricities in individual cases are a small price to pay for what we get in exchange—what we can and should get in exchange—a continuous attempt by Christians in every walk of life to bring spiritual values to bear on every problem that confronts them, according to their best judgement upon its circumstances and details.

But there has been a more important instance in our political life in recent years in which the sanction of religion has been invoked, and in which it has exercised a deep influence on public opinion, with most unhappy results. I refer to the League of Nations. If I speak on this subject with frankness, no one, I am sure, will think for a moment that I am lacking in sympathy with the aims which the religious zealots in this cause had in view. What I am criticizing is the method that they saw fit to adopt—a method, as it seems to me, equally harmful in the religious and in the political sphere, calculated neither to deepen the spiritual life of the nation nor to bring about an improvement in world-affairs.

Between the end of the War and the Italian con-

quest of Abyssinia there was something like a suspension, in this country, of the normal processes of thought and discussion on foreign affairs. Public opinion was crystallized round the formula 'support of the League of Nations'—a formula to which government after government of different political complexions subscribed.

This formula was, in itself, almost meaningless and could therefore be subscribed to, with a greater or lesser degree of mental reservation, by almost any government in the world, or almost any parliamentary candidate in this country. For what is the League? It is a piece of political machinery functioning under the provisions of an international treaty—what is called technically a multilateral treaty. In this sense, 'to support the League' means no more than to go on using the League machinery, as every British Government uses the machinery of the House of Commons, which functions under the British Constitution.

But no one at election time begs the Government to pledge itself to support the House of Commons. Nor has any constitutional zealot ever dreamt of forming a House of Commons Association. How then did it come about that support of the League became the dominant policy—I will go farther and say the orthodox policy—in foreign affairs, and that a large voluntary organization with ramifications in every part of the country and with associated bodies in the Dominions should have been formed on this basis—an organization which, I think it is true to say, at the

zenith of its power wielded more influence than any voluntary organization in this country since the day of Cobden's anti-Corn Law League? I refer, of course, to the League of Nations Union.

The explanation of this curious state of affairs is, I am afraid, very simple—intellectual confusion: a confusion partly due to confused political thinking, to a confusion in Caesar's own mind, and partly to a confusion between the sphere of religion and the sphere of politics, to the intrusion of religion, in a crude and wholesale fashion, into the discussion of a problem on which religion *by itself* could offer no safe guidance.

Let me take first the confusion on the purely political plane, what I have called the confusion in Caesar's own mind.

It is safe to say that between 1919 and 1935 the formula 'support of the League' meant a great deal more than a desire that the British Government should go on performing the motions of attending the Assembly and the Council and paying its share of the League expenses. It meant that the Government should pursue what was called in those days 'a League policy'.

But how was this policy to be defined? The Covenant is a comprehensive document containing statements of general principle capable of application in at least a score of directions, some along lines already familiar in British practice, others on lines quite unfamiliar or even contrary to it. How is a League

policy to be picked out of all this? It is a thorny problem. Nor is it simplified by ignoring the details of the Covenant and confining oneself to the broad statement of policy in the preamble; for the contrast between what is familiar and unfamiliar to the British mind is as much in evidence in the preamble as in the body of the document—even in the English text of the preamble, where the wording is on many points vaguer than in the French.

Under these circumstances it was inevitable that, for a British Government, 'a League policy' should mean a policy embodying a *British* interpretation of the Covenant and selecting, for practical and immediate application, those particular issues or general principles which made the greatest appeal to the British electorate. Is it necessary to add that these particular issues or general principles were almost inevitably bound to be in harmony with British interests?

This is not written in a spirit of sarcasm or by way of reproach. Nor is it incompatible with the view, which is borne out by history, that, on the whole, British interests, as understood by British governments in recent generations, and the interests of the rest of the world are in harmony, in spite of clashes—severe clashes—on many points of detail.

If official British policy was almost bound to develop a British interpretation of the Covenant, it was perhaps not equally inevitable that the voluntary organization of League supporters or zealots should adopt

the same attitude and select much the same issues. But when one reflects on the practical problems which confront any organization which aims at making a large-scale nation-wide appeal, one realizes that it would have been too much to expect of the leaders of such a movement that they should try to swim against the current or, in other words, take a comprehensive rather than a predominantly British view of the Covenant and of the substance of a League of Nations policy.

No doubt, it was open to them to take a broader view of their task and to regard it as primarily educational, rather than propagandist—the education of the British people for co-operation in world-affairs with other peoples, or, at least, with other democratic peoples. But this would have involved slow uphill work for many years and the sacrifice of any prospect of immediate political results: and, rightly or wrongly, the need for immediate political results seemed to the *leaders to be urgent—all the more so as the peoples, not in Britain alone, were clamouring for them.*

Thus it came about that, from 1920 onwards, the League of Nations movement in this country became identified with a policy which was not the policy of the Covenant as a whole but a British version of that policy—a national British interpretation of an international charter. It would be going too far to describe this policy, to which the British electorate in general subscribed between 1920 and 1935, as nationalistic; but it was certainly not international in the

true sense of that term. It was, indeed, in certain of its aspects essentially self-regarding; for one of the main underlying tendencies which characterized it was the avoidance of obligations of assistance to other peoples, even when these were clearly laid down in the Covenant.

Now, in this situation, what should have been the attitude of the religious leaders of the nation—of those to whom public opinion looks for guidance on broad issues of this kind?

I will not presume, even in the light of after events, to lay down what they should have done. But I think that we can see now that there are certain courses of action which should at all costs have been avoided. In the first place, should not the religious leaders of the nation have set their faces firmly against the attempt made, and very naturally made, to enlist them as supporters of what was in essence, in spite of its international trappings, a national policy? Should they not have realized the danger involved in transforming a national political movement—respectable and indeed honourable in its own way—into anything resembling a crusade in which religious sentiment was mobilized for political objectives? For the moment that a political policy can claim a religious sanction—and, more especially, an exclusive religious sanction—the whole atmosphere is changed. Discussion on the habitual British lines becomes much more difficult. The element of intellectual give-and-take evaporates. The supporters of the policy are

spared the necessity of thinking for themselves, whilst its opponents are thrown back on to devices of casuistry, subterfuge, and even hypocrisy.

Thus, during the heyday of this League crusade, it became common to use religious or semi-religious language in regard to political issues. One was asked not what one thought about the League of Nations but whether one believed in it, with the consequent risk that a doubting or critical reply would offend the tender conscience of the questioner. The result has been only what might have been expected. Those who, whether by temperament or as a result of experience, were disinclined to range themselves with the believers were driven into a camp of their own—the Adullam of the so-called 'realists'—and a cleavage was set up in our public opinion upon lines hitherto unfamiliar. For one of the axioms of our political life has always been that all who took part in it should be realists, and that neither realism nor idealism should be the monopoly of any particular group. I suppose that there have always been a few self-confessed non-realists in the House of Commons, but they can generally be counted on the fingers of one hand.<sup>1</sup>

But, if this was the result of the close association between the Churches and British League of Nations policy at home, its effect abroad was even more disastrous; for it led to counter-movements of the same kind, on soil which, as I have explained, was better prepared for them.

<sup>1</sup> In the debate of August 24th, 1939, there were four.

The task of finding a practical adjustment between the various national conceptions of a League of Nations policy would have been difficult enough in any case; for the framers of the Covenant had left most of the important questions open for later discussion. The Covenant, one must never forget, was not brought down, like the Tables of the Law, from Sinai, but was a diplomatic document drawn up rather hastily at an international conference. But this task of adjustment became very much more difficult when the supporters of the various rival schools began to be animated by religious or ideological zeal.

This helps to explain what to many people in England, watching Geneva from afar, must always have seemed surprising—that years of discussion at conference after conference, committee after committee, assembly after assembly, seemed to bring the parties to the argument no nearer together, that they remained obstinately fixed in their respective intellectual trenches, waging wordy warfare against one another and displaying incredible ingenuity in discovering new ways of presenting old arguments or of wrapping up old projects.

One reason—not indeed the only reason, but an important reason—for this chronic deadlock at Geneva, for the utter ineffectiveness of the technique of international co-operation in the very place where it might have been expected to win its greatest triumphs, was the intrusion of religious and pseudo-religious sentiment into the diplomatic Council cham-

ber. There were moments when, in listening to speeches in the League Assembly, one felt that one was in the presence, not of statesmen representing different policies, but of the devotees of contending Churches. For our continental friends who, though they do not always admire our intelligence, maintain under all circumstances a very real respect for our practical ability, were not slow to perceive the value of religious emotion as an ally in their various causes.

As was mentioned in the first chapter, there was in the twenties in France—and not in France alone—a belated revival of Positivism or the Religion of Humanity with its cult of Progress, a creed of which Aristide Briand was, for a short time, the accepted, if unconscious, high priest. For most of us in this country the Great War marked the passing of what we now retrospectively call the Victorian idea of progress—an idea which, for the readers of Dean Inge, received its *coup de grâce* in his Romanes lecture.<sup>1</sup> But in France so respected a figure in the intellectual world as the Abbé Loisy, famed for his controversy with Harnack over the essentials of Christianity and since 1909 a member of the Collège de France, resuscitated, or rather gave new precision to, the idea of Progress by declaring<sup>2</sup> that the League of Nations 'implied a religion of humanity' and that, in the fullness of time, it would itself be the outward and

<sup>1</sup> Reprinted in the second volume of his *Outspoken Essays* (1927).

<sup>2</sup> In his book *Are there Two Sources of Religion and Morality?* (1933), written as a criticism of Bergson's book on this subject.

visible form of such a religion. Indeed, towards the conclusion of his argument he works himself up to a peroration in which, quoting the Apocalypse, he virtually identifies Geneva with the new Jerusalem—‘that universal city, open to all men, a city of light and life for which the earth will be fruitful in peace’.

Can we be surprised that there was for some time concern in Roman Catholic circles lest Geneva should come to be regarded as the repository of a new form of religious orthodoxy, and lest the instruction in the League of Nations which an Assembly resolution recommended might turn out to be an up-to-date version of a Positivist catechism?

All that has now passed away, almost like a dream, but not without causing disillusionment and mental suffering which could and should have been avoided and, above all, not without cheapening and vulgarizing the cause of religion itself.

Nor can we leave out of account, in this connexion, the fact that the violent revulsion against internationalism and everything connected with it in the minds of the rulers of the Totalitarian States and the intellectual circles round them was more than a movement of opinion: it was the setting up of a new faith in opposition to what they had been led to consider was itself a faith.

Am I saying, then, that it was wrong for the leaders of the Churches to manifest their sympathy with the cause of the League of Nations? Should they have

stood coldly aside, dissociating themselves from the political aspirations of the great mass of their fellow countrymen? No, I am not suggesting this for a moment. But what I do suggest is that it would have been better if, in all such manifestations of sympathy and in all efforts to guide public opinion in regard to the League of Nations policy, three overriding considerations had been kept steadily in view.

The first is that Christians are members of an oecumenical body—a body the members of which are scattered throughout the world. Oecumenicity—if the reader will excuse this awkward word—is, or should be, a much closer bond than internationalism. It is not a bond between two independent groups: it is membership in a single group. This membership throws on Christians, and particularly upon the local spokesman of any branch of the Christian Church, a special responsibility—a responsibility to avoid, not only anything savouring of unfairness or of self-regarding nationalism, but also any lack of sympathy or understanding in references to the concerns of fellow Christians in other countries.

I do not wish to go into the events of September, 1938, but I have reason to know that our fellow Christians in Czechoslovakia were cut to the heart by the attitude of some of our religious leaders in the crisis—their attitude, as distinguished from their policy, or their approval of the Government's policy—an attitude which made them feel that their fellow Christians in England regarded it as quite right and

proper that a small nation should sacrifice its national existence in order to enable richer and more powerful peoples to live in peace.

This is only one instance of an insular habit of mind against which we as Christians should be on our guard all the time in every international issue which arises. Would we not have had a far greater chance of breaking the persistent Geneva deadlock if the ecclesiastical spokesmen who addressed Albert Hall meetings in support of British policy at Geneva had made our continental friends feel that they were capable of seeing the problems at issue from *their* angle also, that they understood what it was which divided the negotiators, and would do their best to promote that spirit of wisdom and understanding without which no problem—least of all an international problem—can be solved? Is it not one of the functions of the Christian leaders in this country to keep in touch with what their fellow Christians are feeling all over the world? Is not their function in this respect similar to that of the Foreign Secretary—with this difference, that they do not receive a sheaf of cipher telegrams every day and are not called upon to take immediate action? But the process of keeping in touch is just as necessary in either case and should go on, if not day by day at least month by month, without interruption. If it is said that the leaders of the Churches are too busy with other matters to give their mind to the concerns of their fellow Christians abroad, then I say there is something seriously wrong

somewhere and that there is scope for new activities and new responsibilities in this field.

The second suggestion can be summed up in the word 'perspective'. Certainly it was right for our Christian leaders to support the cause of the League—but not as the one and only thing that matters in the international life of to-day. For at best the League was, or is, a short-distance issue—and moreover an issue which, as presented in the twenties, called for little or no personal effort on the part of the individual citizen. Is it not part of the duty of educated Christians to resist the desire for quick results, the short-sighted sensationalism spoken of in the last chapter? Ought not Christian leaders to be recalling men *all the time* to the more difficult tasks, the long-distance tasks?

And finally, should not the Churches, whilst manifesting their sympathy for the League of Nations, have warned Christians in season and out of season against the delusion that the League could in any way be associated with the conception of the Kingdom of God? I would be almost ashamed to emphasize this had I not so constantly heard and read utterances and statements to the contrary—suggestions that the League was in some way part of a Messianic scheme, a milestone on the road to an ultimate World Commonwealth.

I do not wish to argue here the case for and against a World Commonwealth as a political concept. My point is that it *is* a political concept and belongs to the

domain of political science, not of religion. Is not this made quite plain to us in the Gospel teaching about the Kingdom?

We realize to-day that the new international order, which seemed so near to us twenty years ago, is still a very long way off—that a generation or more of education in international relations is required before even the more politically mature peoples will be ready to co-operate in transforming the ideas and principles of the Covenant into practical working policies. Is that a reason for discouragement? Only for those who allowed themselves to be buoyed up by foolish hopes and for whom those hopes had become associated with their religious beliefs. Ought we indeed to feel depressed by the discovery that large new conceptions of policy cannot be improvised in an emergency but require to be discussed and matured—as all the great changes in recent centuries of European history have been discussed and matured—in the world of thought? If our record in foreign affairs during the last twenty years has shown intellectual inconsistency and lack of consideration for other peoples, that is at least partly due to the fact that before 1914 hardly any one was *thinking* about these issues. Our present duty, both as students and as Christians, is to *think about them*—and not to wring our hands and ask ourselves whether we would not have wished to be born into some other time. The extravagant hopes that so many Christians entertained a few years ago have too often been succeeded by a mood

of almost eschatological despair which is as un-Christian as it is unscholarly. The scholar's duty is to go on thinking even (as Horace prophetically put it) when thunderbolts rain down from the sky. The Christian's duty is to hold fast to the things that are eternal. And for both of them, in difficult days, the motto is **SURSUM CORDA**.

## IV

### *THE WAR AND ITS AFTERMATH*

THE preceding pages were concerned with the question what should be the Christian attitude towards international politics. We stressed the fact that, generally speaking—and leaving aside quite special cases, such as the slavery question at the end of the eighteenth century—our British tradition, which is averse to the organization of parties on religious lines, has justified itself. We then went on to deal with the particular problem of the League of Nations and showed the dangers involved, both for religion and for international politics, through the crude and wholesale way in which some religious leaders had identified themselves with a particular British view of League policy. In this chapter we shall be dealing with another case in which confusion and mischief have been caused in much the same way by the unthinking application of moral standards and maxims to a particularly complex and delicate problem, and by the invoking of religious sentiment in support of this so-called moral issue. I refer to the international problem arising out of the War and the Peace Treaties—an immense problem but, for our purposes to-day, a single problem, a problem that can be envisaged as a whole.

Let us begin by relating this problem to the conclusions reached in the opening chapter. Are we

justified as scholars in bringing moral judgements to bear on such a problem as the causes of the Great War and of its consequences as embodied in the Peace Treaties? Is it not the scholar's duty simply to discover the facts, by the use of the best available instruments of historical science, to record these facts, to communicate them to others in speech or writing, and then to leave the matter there, without passing any moral judgement upon it—and, of course, abstaining also, as a necessary consequence, from embarking on any course of action such as might have followed from such a moral judgement? That has been the view of distinguished historians in recent generations, as also of men eminent in other departments of social science. It was set forth in classic form by Professor J. B. Bury in his inaugural lecture as Regius Professor of Modern History at Cambridge in 1903, a lecture composed as a counterblast to the still more notable inaugural of his predecessor Lord Acton. 'History', declared Bury, in an oft-quoted sentence, 'is a Science, nothing less and nothing more.'

Now it is not the function of Science to pass moral judgements. Science describes: it does not judge. It answers the question: *How?* It is not concerned with the question *Why?* It is true that Bury was not quite consistent in his attempt to identify the purpose and method of history with those of the natural sciences, for in one passage of his lecture he faces the questions *Why?* Why research? he asks. Why the heaping up of all this material of trivial records and statistics?

The answer is that it is being done for the sake of posterity. 'The business of the historian of to-day', he says, 'is to help to build, firm and solid, some of the countless stairs by which men of distant ages mount to a height unattainable by us and have a vision of history which we cannot win standing on our lower slope.'<sup>1</sup>

Far be it from me to decry, for one instant, the nobility, the austerity, I would almost say the majesty of this conception of the historian's task. Every scholar and student is working for posterity, for those who will come after them in their own institution and in the wider world. But you will have noticed that Professor Bury, in an almost monastic gesture of self-denial, permits the historian of the dim future, the super-historian, as we may term him, after assimilating the fruits of the research of the long line of his predecessors, to have what he calls 'a vision of history'—or, in other words, to form a judgement on human history as a whole, to have a philosophy of history, to give his answer to the insistent question 'Why?' But if this is legitimate for the historian of the future, why should it not be legitimate for the historian of to-day to attempt to give his own answer—however inadequate it must necessarily be? Why should Bury refuse to allow us to go beyond mere description, the mere heaping up and recording of what are called facts?

Bury's answer to this would be that we are still at

<sup>1</sup> J. B. Bury, *Selected Essays*, ed. Temperley (1930), p. 17.

too early a stage in the progress of historical science, of science as a whole and of mankind as a whole; for Bury was a rationalist who clung to what I called in the last chapter the Victorian conception of progress. That is why he was able to cherish such a touching faith in the powers of the super-historian of the far future. But those of us who are not Positivists may well ask ourselves whether what is allowable to the super-historian is not allowable to us also. And indeed, if we debar ourselves as scholars from forming moral judgements, how can our life as scholars be made compatible with our life as Christians? Is it tolerable for us to cut ourselves into two—to separate our study of history from the whole of the rest of our personality?

This brings us back, in a somewhat different connexion, to the problem discussed in the first chapter—the problem of the relation between our duty to Caesar and our duty to God. Have we one duty to Science and another to Conscience—one duty to Clio, the Muse of History, and another to the captain of our soul? Are the values of science and the values of the spirit simply *juxtaposed*, with no inner connexion between them? If we accepted such a view we should, in effect, be sending historians, including historians of the contemporary period, into a monastery—and with them would go the whole company of dispassionate, conscientious, fair-minded scientific students of international affairs—for instance, the two thousand five hundred members of the Royal Institute

of International Affairs. And who would then be left to frame judgements, to educate opinion, and to construct policies in regard to these issues? The large mass of the community which, much as we value its sturdy common sense, has not submitted itself to any intelligent discipline in these matters—an intelligent discipline, let us emphasize in passing, which is also a moral discipline.

It is clear, then, that for us, from the standpoint that we adopted in our first chapter, Bury was wrong and Acton was right in that historic Cambridge controversy. We *are* justified in bringing moral values to bear on history, including contemporary history, moral values of the same kind as we apply—or should seek to apply—in our conduct as citizens in forming our opinion on the many smaller issues that confront us day by day. The contemporary historian and the citizen—the scholar and the newspaper reader—are not two separate beings. The two activities are simply two aspects of the same process of judgement—a process upon which, as I said before, spiritual values ought to be brought to bear all the time and in every detail. If I may once more adapt that famous sentence of Burke's, I would say that when we make up our mind on a contemporary issue we should remember so to be scholars as not to forget that we are British citizens, and when we are studying an issue which makes a strong appeal to our national emotions and perhaps also our national prejudices, we should remember so to be British citizens as not to forget that

we are scholars. Let us cherish as a precious part of our national heritage the habit of seeing and judging political issues—contemporary political issues—in moral terms.

Among the 105 footnotes with which Acton's inaugural lecture is adorned—for in this case the footnotes really are an adornment—is the following quotation from the speech made by one great French historian, Taine, on the reception of another, Albert Sorel, into the French Academy. It is in note 95.

'The conviction that man is before all a moral being and a free being, and that having made up his mind alone, in his conscience and before God, as to the rule that he is to follow in his conduct, he must devote himself—the whole of himself—to applying it in himself and in his relations with others, uncompromisingly, persistently, inflexibly, in a perpetual resistance to the influence of others and in a perpetual mastery exercised over himself—that is the great contribution of England.'

That sets a standard for us to live up to—a standard to which, let us hope, we shall always hold fast.

Having thus confirmed ourselves in this great tradition, and having resolved to do our best to be true to it in regard to the issues of our own day, let us now turn to consider how to apply it to the problem under review—the problem of the War and the Peace Treaties. We shall see how necessary it is that the moralist and the scholar should not lose touch with one another and what havoc can be caused when, with the best of intentions, the moralist arrives at

moral judgements and political opinions without affording his conscience the enlightenment which the scholar could have supplied.

*How can moral judgements be applied to historical events?*

It is easier to ask this question than to answer it. Should our moral judgements apply to individuals, or to countries, or to the age as a whole, or to particular features of the age, such as its political system or its economic system or its system of thought? We are dissatisfied with the materialism of the modern age, with the tone and temper which have accompanied the development of machines. We are dissatisfied: we frame an indictment in moral terms, in Christian terms: and we look round for some one to blame. Whom are we to blame? Is it James Watt, for discovering the steam-engine? Or nineteenth-century Britain for developing it? Or twentieth-century America for outdoing Britain at her own game? Or the entrepreneurs, independent of nationality, who carried this new form of organization to the ends of the earth? Or the statesmen who encouraged them and framed policies to harmonize with their activities? Or the theorists who composed systems of political economy to explain and to justify them? Or the universities which covered the theorists with the mantle of their authority?

Looking round on this intricate scene, with the whole multitude of these culprits before his mind's eye—a multitude extending in space over the face of the globe and in time over a century and a half—does

not the censorious moralist find himself willing to wound and yet afraid to strike? For can he be sure that in any individual case his blame will be merited? And can moral judgements be applied otherwise than to individuals? Can we apply them to countries? Or even to lesser agglomerations? Will it be the University of Oxford or ourselves as individuals who will have some day to render the account of our academic career? In what sense, if any, can moral categories be applied to social groups, to corporations, companies, parties, classes, countries? Not an easy question to answer, in spite of the airy way in which, in popular speech, in our very natural desire for brevity, we talk of the ambitions of a country, the unscrupulousness of a party, the meanness of a railway company, and even the shortcomings of a university.

Having glanced at this major difficulty in applying moral judgements to large issues—a difficulty which will remain a lion in our path for the rest of this discussion—let us now come to close grips with our problem of to-day. *Was the Great War a sin?* And, if so, who committed the sin, and whom are we justified in blaming for it?

As soon as the problem is thus presented, are we not conscious that there is—to put it mildly—some inappropriateness in this way of looking at it? It is not that we feel that the notion of sin is itself out of place—the history of the last twenty-five years has for many of us made the notion of sin much more vivid and

actual than it was before—but that the search for individual sinners seems a petty and indeed a grotesquely irrelevant enterprise amid this convulsion which has engulfed an entire world. Even if, by the methods of the most exact scholarship, we could lay our hands on one individual who lit the match which fired the explosion of 1914, would we not feel it to be a kind of absurdity to heap the whole of our moral condemnation on to him alone?

It is, I think, for some such reason as this—though not consciously formulated—that many, indeed I think most, of those who have tried to apply moral judgements to the Great War have shifted their ground, transferring the issue from the sphere of morality proper to that of legality. We have not heard very much of the Great War as a sin. We have much more often heard of it as a *crime*.

No doubt, this narrows the issue and makes it a good deal more precise. But does it make it any more satisfactory to handle? Who is the criminal? And what law did he break? Neither of these questions is easy to answer. Each of them involves us in a maze of technical considerations in which the thread of the moral issue is very liable to slip out of our hands.

Who is the criminal? Is he a person or a country? If the latter, in what sense can a country be said to commit a crime? Is there such a thing as a collective crime? Can a college or a limited liability company be put in the dock in a criminal action? Can a university be sent to penal servitude? No, a corporation or

any social group possessing what is called a legal personality can be sued in a civil action and can be made to pay damages for the commission of a *wrong*, but a *collective crime* is a conception unknown to our law.

It is for that reason that when, at the end of the War, a demand arose in this country for the punishment of those who committed the crime of provoking it, the framers of the Treaty of Versailles fixed the guilt upon a single person, the ruler of Germany at the time of the outbreak of the War. (Perhaps if he had still been alive and his Empire still in being they would have set the Emperor Francis Joseph by his side.) Here is the war-guilt article of the Treaty of Versailles, No. 227, the first article in Part VII of the Treaty, which is devoted to *Penalties*, a term of criminal law. It precedes Part VIII, which is devoted to *Reparation*, a term of civil law.

‘The Allied and Associated Powers publicly arraign William II of Hohenzollern, formerly German Emperor, for a supreme offence against international morality and the sanctity of treaties.

‘A special tribunal will be constituted to try the accused, thereby assuring him the guarantees essential to the right of defence. It will be composed of five judges, one appointed by each of the following Powers: namely, the United States of America, Great Britain, France, Italy and Japan.

‘In its decision the tribunal will be guided by the highest motives of international policy, with a view to vindicating the solemn obligations of international

undertakings and the validity of international morality. It will be its duty to fix the punishment which it considers should be imposed.'

The language, it will be observed, is the language of criminal proceedings: 'try the accused', not the defendant; 'fix the punishment', not the damages. It is true that the offence is described as one against international morality rather than against the criminal law; but the reason for that is very simple. It is that there was not at the time any international code of criminal law—nor is there to-day. It is for that reason that many lawyers, and many people other than lawyers, especially in France, felt grave doubts about the wisdom and indeed the propriety of the whole proceeding—and, as every one knows, it ended in futility.

But, it will be said, did not the Allies at the Peace Conference fix the guilt of the War upon the German people as a whole? And is not this one of the matters about which we ought to feel most ashamed, as we look back on it? My answer on this point is categorical. We have many things to be ashamed of just now as British citizens, but this is not one of them. The war-guilt article in the Treaty is Article 227 which has just been quoted, fixing the guilt upon the Kaiser. The widespread notion that there is an article fixing the guilt upon the entire German people is a legend, a myth, sedulously promulgated from 1919 onwards—a myth that has obtained very wide circulation, since it won the credence of many ill-informed persons,

including some who might have been expected to look into it more closely, such as the late Viscount Grey.<sup>1</sup>

It would take me too long to go into the details on this matter. They are set forth in masterly fashion by the late Professor Harold Temperley in an article contributed to *History*, the quarterly journal of the Historical Association, in October 1932—an article provoked by a sermon preached at Geneva by the Archbishop of York on the occasion of the opening of the Disarmament Conference.<sup>2</sup>

The thesis set forth in Professor Temperley's article was not challenged in the pages of *History* and, no doubt, it convinced the vast majority of those who read it. But how many *did* read it, compared with the number of those who, directly and indirectly, fell under the influence of the myth which it sought to dispel?

Mythology, as the anthropologists have helped us

<sup>1</sup> See his *Twenty-Five Years* (Introduction to 1928 edition).

<sup>2</sup> For a first-hand contemporary account of how the article came to be drafted in the awkward form that it finally assumed, readers are referred to Mr. Keynes's *The Economic Consequences of the Peace*, pp. 139–41. Writing in 1919, Mr. Keynes remarked that 'all this is only a matter of draftsmanship, which does no-one any harm, and which practically seemed much more important at the time than it ever will again between now and Judgment Day'. He did not foresee the leverage that was being supplied to German propagandists, still less that they would magnify the issue by an ingenious mistranslation of a keyword in the text of the article. Professor Temperley's article gives further references to literature on the subject. Germans to-day are, of course, being brought up in the belief that *no* responsibility rests upon their country for the events of 1914.

to realize, is a crude and primitive form of theology. On the foundations supplied by this particular myth, and by an almost equally unfounded condemnation of the territorial provisions of the Peace Treaties—provisions which, as has already been said, though not free from blemish, represented a very substantial improvement over the map of 1914—there has been built a superstructure, a political argument, constructed, I will not say on theological lines but on lines which can be described as a caricature of theological reasoning.

The argument, reduced to its crudest form, runs somewhat as follows. The present troubled state of the world is due to the Treaty of Versailles. That Treaty was a sin because it was a violation of the promises made to the Germans when they laid down their arms. Therefore, ever since the Peace Conference, we in this country have been morally in the wrong. We have a duty, as Christians, to repent, to confess the wrong done, and to repair it in so far as we can. But in the early years after the War we were stubborn and hard-hearted: our conscience was slow to prick us. So it came about that the debt between us and Germany mounted up until it could not be paid off without great sacrifices on our part—sacrifices which it is right that we, as sinners, should be called upon to pay. The present régime in Germany is the inevitable consequence of Versailles. It is the outward and visible sign of our own moral failure, our failure to extend the hand of friendship and

reconciliation to Germany after the War. If Herr Hitler is violent in speech and brutal in action, if he preaches the doctrine of the knock-out blow and crushes under foot all who raise a finger or a voice against his rule, he is merely echoing the war-speeches of our own leaders and copying the methods that they adopted at the Peace Conference.

From this moral or, as I have called it, pseudo-theological reasoning there is drawn a very simple practical conclusion—namely, that it is our duty to do now what we failed to do in 1919, to extend the hand of reconciliation to Germany and to take active steps to repair the injustices we committed in 1919. And when this policy is criticized on the ground that the present régime in Germany shows no signs of reciprocating our sentiments and of adopting a conciliatory policy, either at home or abroad, the answer given by the exponents of this school of thought is that it is for us to take the first step—to go courageously forward in the faith that our action, conceived as it is along Christian lines, cannot help proving infectious, that, if we only persist in it, resolutely and unflinchingly, it will assuredly evoke a response among the German people and their rulers, and so bring about a change in the whole atmosphere of international politics, enabling a real peace settlement at last to be made.

Now, what are we, as students of international affairs and as Christians, to say of this reasoning? Surely the first thing that strikes us about it as students is its narrowness—I had almost said its

provincialism. It is narrow almost to the point of being egocentric. It is circumscribed both in time and space—circumscribed in time because it ignores all that preceded the Peace Conference—the whole history of international politics before and during the War, including the whole previous history of Germany, as though that threw no light at all on the present phase in that country: circumscribed in space because it ignores all other States and peoples but the British and the German, limiting the issue to a sort of spiritual duel between the souls of these two contestants. Britain and Germany are, so to speak, at the judgement seat. There is atonement to be made for wrong done. Let judgement be rendered, regardless of consequence. Let the right prevail.

What, I ask again, are we as students and as Christians to say of this chain of reasoning? As students I think the fittest comment to be made on it is in the language of Burke already quoted. It is vitiated as a basis of policy because it does not take circumstances into account, because it ignores what Burke called 'the men and the things'; that is to say, the character and disposition of the peoples—all the peoples—concerned and the circumstances—all the circumstances—underlying the present crisis.

And what are we to say of this thesis as Christians? If I did not feel rather shy of using the language of moral condemnation, I should call it wicked. Let us be more charitable, and say of it that it is the product of an unworthy state of mind of which those who are

swayed by it are unconscious—a state of mind that is a compound of fear, laziness, and a certain element of remorse.

Just consider, for a moment, the details of the thesis. We owe Germany atonement for our moral lapse in 1919 and the subsequent years. Why Germany? Why not, for instance, Armenia? By every standard of human justice our unpaid debt to Armenia is incomparably greater than any debt that we can be said to owe to Germany. The Armenian people fought on our side in the War, holding the Turkish front in the Caucasus single-handed, after the defection of Russia at the end of 1917, and thus largely facilitating our conquest of Palestine. Their losses were proportionately much heavier than those of any of the other belligerents—on either side. Out of a nation of four and a half millions more than a million succumbed. The pledges given to the Armenians by our government were quite specific. Armenia was mentioned by name by our Prime Minister in his war-aims speech of 5 January 1918 as one of the territories then forming part of Turkey which was 'entitled to a recognition of its separate national condition'. 'What exact form that recognition should be,' Mr. Lloyd George went on, 'need not here be discussed beyond stating that it would be impossible to restore to their former sovereignty the territories to which I have already referred.' This unequivocal pledge of liberation from Turkish rule was endorsed a few days later in President Wilson's Fourteen Points speech in the

following words: 'The other nationalities which are now under Turkish rule should be assured an undoubted security of life and an absolutely unmolested opportunity of autonomous development.' What happened? An attempt was made to write the letter of the pledge into the Treaty of Sèvres. But when Mustapha Kemal, as he then was, roused the Turkish people in opposition to the Treaty, we and the Americans lost interest and left the Armenians to their fate. And when ten years later a great practical idealist, Fridtjof Nansen, tried to revive that interest through a scheme for promoting the settlement of Armenian refugees in the small Soviet Republic of Erivan, his appeal fell upon deaf ears at Geneva. There is only one adjective that can be used to characterize our behaviour to the Armenians: shameful.<sup>1</sup>

But how many of us really do feel ashamed about it? Very few. Why? Because the Armenians are too weak and too poor to bring the facts of their situation continually before our notice. They are not in a position to advertise their cause: they cannot conduct propaganda. Above all, they are not able to threaten us with pains and penalties if we fail to listen to them. So our conscience does not prick about Armenia.

Does not this suggest the question: Is it really our conscience that is pricking us about Germany? Is it

<sup>1</sup> The Armenian claims at the Peace Conference are reprinted in Cooke and Stickney, *Readings in European International Relations since 1897* (Harpers, 1931), pp. 665 ff.

not some other element in our make-up, masquerading under the name of conscience? Is it not—shall we call it by its Latin name?—a certain timidity, or would it be better to call it *prudence*? Fear is altogether too downright a word. Prudence counsels us—and I do not deny the force of her counsels—to pay more attention to Germany than we have paid for the last twenty years to Armenia—or than we paid to Germany before she rearmed. By all means let us be prudent: but do not let us pretend that prudence and righteousness are the same thing.

Then there is the element of remorse. I do not deny that, in the story of British-German relations since 1895—when the tension between the two peoples first began to be felt—there is ground for remorse, remorse on both sides. Moreover, the Christian leaders of this country have a particular ground for feeling remorse because on a crucial occasion they allowed a great opportunity for moral leadership to go by default. In the last chapter the remark was made, in connexion with the slavery question, that every now and then issues arose which called for a direct application of moral standards to politics; there were even occasions, it was added, when such issues *ought* to be aroused. One such issue—a very plain issue—arose within a few weeks of the signing of the Armistice. The Prime Minister had embarked on an election campaign with a programme, one of the main planks of which was in violation of an international engagement on which the ink was hardly dry—the reparations

clause of the pre-Armistice agreement. I will not go into the details of that clause. It was certainly a very mild provision; for it limited the reparation claim to direct losses suffered by civilians through enemy action,<sup>1</sup> leaving aside all the indirect losses sustained—in the West mainly by the French—through the interference (I am using an innocuous word) caused to them and to their businesses and livelihood by the German occupation of large portions of their country. There is therefore some ground for arguing that the reparations clause of the pre-Armistice agreement was not, strictly speaking, equitable. But that did not alter the fact that it was a binding agreement—as binding as the Belgian Treaty of 1839 with the violation of which our action in August 1914 had so much to do. In other words, the Prime Minister was committing the British people, within a few weeks of the Armistice, to a policy which involved an offence against international morality (to use the language of the Versailles treaty) of the same kind as that which we later imputed to the Kaiser.

Here surely was a moral issue of the plainest and most unmistakable kind—and an issue which, as was evident to any student of international affairs, was pregnant with momentous consequences for the future of Europe and of the world. Did the leaders of the Churches raise their voices in protest? Some few of

<sup>1</sup> The exact terms in the pre-Armistice agreement are as follow: 'Compensation will be made by Germany for all damage done to the civilian population of the Allies and their property by the aggression of Germany by land, by sea and from the air.'

them did, to their lasting credit.<sup>1</sup> But the most representative voices were silent. The Churches, as such, did not make themselves felt in the general election of December 1918, which, more than any other single event, set the tone and created the special problems of the post-War period; for it was the House of Commons thus elected which made true co-operation between Great Britain and the United States impossible at the Peace Conference, with the lasting results that we all know. The great national sin of the general election of December 1918—the word ‘sin’, I think, in this connexion is really appropriate—went unrebuked by the religious leaders of the nation, who, with eyes averted from the immediate scene, were immersed in wishful thinking about the League of Nations.

Yes, there is ground for remorse here, remorse which is felt, if I am not mistaken, by others besides our religious leaders, by some of those, still surviving, who were concerned with these political happenings.

What is a Christian’s duty when he feels remorse? No doubt it is to make amends—if he can. But alas! in politics it is never possible to make amends, in the sense in which one man can make amends to another. The leaf is turned. It cannot be reversed. History moves on. The Fates, as we say, are *remorseless*. They do not allow us to make amends, as, in our easy-going way, we like to think that we can. Those to whom the amends are due have passed from the

<sup>1</sup> Mention may be made of Bishop Gore and Bishop Henson.

political scene—not only the leaders, but their whole generation. Statesmen have indeed to face a new situation not every generation or every year, but every day, as the telegrams that reach them bear witness. To talk of making amends for particular sins is therefore to use language which is out of place in politics—more especially in international politics—as out of place as the conception of applying the principles of the criminal law to this or that ruler or statesman.

How, then, it will be asked, should a Christian regard the situation between Great Britain and Germany? What should be his attitude towards the German people and their rulers here and now? I will try to answer this question frankly even if I cannot answer it precisely. No one who has not access to inside knowledge can answer it precisely, because we cannot tell how far the present rulers of Germany represent the German people.

In the first place, we should not allow our vision to be contracted so that we see nothing more than a relationship between Great Britain and Germany. We must never lose sight of the simultaneity of international affairs, never forget that we are dealing with a world-situation, a situation which it is our duty to try to see as a whole. In that sense of the word we should strive to be Totalitarians, to let our eyes envisage the whole panorama, rather than to fix our gaze on some one portion of it, however arresting it may be. This is one of the respects in

which what I have called the pseudo-theological attitude of mind is definitely unjust. It is unjust to the whole company of other peoples who are affected by anything that takes place between Britain and Germany.

In this matter I think that many well-meaning Christian people have been seriously misled by a too literal interpretation of certain passages in the Gospel. I am referring to the passages in which a contrast is drawn between sinners and outwardly respectable members of society—between the publicans and the Pharisees, between the prodigal son and his elder brother, between the ‘one sinner that repenteth’ and ‘the ninety and nine just persons that need no repentance’. We all realize how profound and searching is the criticism of our existing social relations which these passages convey. They should never be absent from our minds and hearts. But they cannot be applied directly to the relation between peoples—and we can be sure that they were never intended to be so applied. Any statesman who allowed himself, under the influence of this strain in the Gospel teaching, to show a preference to any one people rather than to another would be acting unjustly—I would go farther and say morbidly. He would, in fact, be encouraging other nations to behave unscrupulously in order to win the good graces of the British Government by a semblance of repentance.

I know that to some minds, and, I fear, to some religious minds, sinners are always interesting—the

greater the sin the greater the morbid interest—whereas elder brothers, countries like Holland, Switzerland, and Sweden, are put down as dull. But the fact remains that it is the dull countries, the correct countries, the virtuous countries, the countries that are happy because they are seldom in the headlines, which supply the indispensable elements for the construction of any practical fabric of world-order. To leave these countries and the overseas democracies out of the picture and to concentrate our attention on centres of disturbance like Germany is to provide for ourselves a distorted view of the world. That is both unjust and unscholarly—indeed, intellectually dishonest. It is not surprising that some of those who do so allow themselves to fall into a mood of fantastic despair. But do not let them imagine that to luxuriate in this kind of emotion is to make any contribution to the better ordering of the world.

In the second place, it is our duty to try to see Germany as she is, not as we would wish her to be. It is impossible, within the limits of this chapter, to enter into an analysis either of the German character or of existing conditions in that country, either of the permanent background or of the particular circumstances with which our statesmen have just now to deal. But one or two summary indications may be helpful.

The principal centre of political disturbance in the world is the continent of Europe—though there is another active political volcano in the Far East. And

the principal centre of the European disturbance is Germany. One can say in a sentence that *the European problem is the German problem*. There are other problems in plenty; but, if the German problem were solved, they would all be manageable. They would yield to common-sense treatment. The German problem has been an incubus on the development of neighbourly relations between the European peoples since the 1860's, when the liberal and democratic movement received a decisive setback at the hands of the Prussian king and his Minister, Bismarck, who then proceeded to embark on three wars within less than ten years. The anti-liberal movement, the full force of which we are feeling to-day, dates from that decade.

Why was it possible for Bismarck successfully to withstand the onset of what had seemed till that time—as it seemed again after 1918—to be an irresistible movement of political progress? The explanation is to be found in the political immaturity of the German people. We might push our analysis farther back and ask why the Germans should have been then, and should have remained, so much less capable in the sphere of politics than nearly all their neighbours—for instance, the Swedes, the Danes, the Dutch, the Belgians, the French, the Swiss, and the Czechs. For the Germans cannot plead the excuse, which can be made for many of the peoples of Eastern Europe, of having been subjected for generations to foreign domination.

I think such an analysis would reveal that the misfortunes of Germany in recent generations—misfortunes chiefly of her own making—have been due to romantic thinking or day-dreaming of much the same kind as that of which some Englishmen have been guilty in the field of foreign affairs during the last twenty years—day-dreaming which has taken the form of pursuing the politically unattainable in the name of abstract principles.

It is certainly impossible to defend, on abstract principles of justice, a world-situation in which English is used as an official language in almost the whole of North America and almost the whole of Australasia (except for a few French islands), in India, and in South, East, and West Africa, while German is not an official language anywhere outside Germany. Whose fault is that? Who is to blame for it? *History and geography are to blame*—history which delayed the political union of the German people, and geography which denied them a frontier either on the Atlantic or the Mediterranean. It is history and geography, not Britain, Holland, France, Spain, and Portugal, which are, if I may so put it, the standing enemies of Germany, which have cruelly barred her out from her place in the sun.

And she has a third ancient and even more inveterate enemy—an enemy that never ceases to haunt and disturb her—political metaphysics, the habit of drawing practical political conclusions from chains of abstract philosophical reasoning.

There is no real *solution* of the German problem except through the political education of the German people—an education which will make them, man for man, the political equals of their politically more intelligent neighbours—a slow process, and a process that is not likely to be accomplished except at the cost of much effort and suffering, suffering both experienced by Germans and inflicted by them on others; for the political education of a vigorous and powerful nation that has dropped behind its neighbours is a costly process.

There is much that the more fortunate Great Powers, the United States, Great Britain, and France, might have done, both before and since the Great War, to promote that process of education, had they understood the nature of the problem and had they chosen to act together in dealing with it. To-day they and the rest of Europe find themselves face to face with a phenomenon previously unknown in the history of the world—a modern nation whose rulers have organized the whole of its life—every element in it which is organizable at all—political, economic, social, and intellectual, on a military basis, a basis which assumes a chronic condition of war, open and latent, between Germany and any Power that chooses to challenge the supremacy to which she has now momentarily attained over the peoples of the European continent. Never since the days of ancient Sparta has a nation been so systematically militarized. It may, of course, be that militarism carries within

it its own antidote and that this system, with its corollary of economic self-sufficiency, will collapse by its own weight. But in the meantime it is there before our eyes, powerful, aggressive, and menacing, deliberately conceived for the purpose of overthrowing the world order to which history and geography have accustomed us and inaugurating a new one in the name of dynamic justice.

That is the situation—a situation from which too many Christians have in recent years been averting their eyes.

V  
*'PEACE'*

THE last chapter left us face to face with a Germany, rearmed and menacing, prepared to enforce her claim to what she entitles dynamic justice, a claim that cannot be made effective without a general upheaval, without overturning the system of world politics that has come down to us from the developments of the last four centuries—a system in which the English-speaking peoples hold a predominant share of political power. We have now to ask ourselves what should be our attitude, as Christians, in face of this challenge?

It will, I think, simplify discussion if we break up the problem; for there are really two separate issues involved. There is the intellectual challenge made in the name of dynamic justice, and there is the practical challenge, arising from the fact that the rulers of Germany are prepared to back up their claim by resort to force.

These two issues are distinct. We might admit the first and deny the second; that is to say, admit the validity of the German claim but deny the Germans' right to enforce it by violence. Or we might reject the German claim and nevertheless be unwilling to resist it by force. Let us therefore deal with the two issues separately.

What should be our attitude as Christians to the predominance that the English-speaking peoples exer-

cise in the twentieth-century world, and in particular to the large share in that power that is exercised by Great Britain, the country of which we are citizens?

First, let us be quite clear as to the nature and extent of that power—that power which the rulers of Germany grudge to us—for too many Christians avert their eyes from power-political facts as if there were something unclean about them.

Among the sixty-odd so-called sovereign States which constitute the so-called Family of Nations there are seven so-called Great Powers. But in reality there are only two Great Powers, if the test of the last war still holds good. These two are the United States and the British Commonwealth, with Great Britain holding by far the preponderant share of the political power of the Commonwealth.

The power of the United States of America and the British Commonwealth does not rest on their numbers. China has four times the population of the United States and eight times that of the white population of the British Commonwealth. Nor does it rest on the extent of their territory, on the fact that 'the sun never sets on the British Empire', or that the United States of America is as large as the whole of Europe. Painting the map is not, in the twentieth century, necessarily a way of increasing a State's power. On the contrary, it may increase its liabilities in proportion to its assets.

On the material side, the power of the United States and Great Britain rests substantially on three facts.

1. That they have under their control 75 per cent. of the mineral resources of the globe.
2. That they have control, through their sea power, of all the oceans of the globe except the north-west portion of the Pacific, thus being able to safeguard the transport of industrial raw materials and foodstuffs from their places of origin to their shores.
3. That they have 60 per cent. of the manufacturing power of the globe.<sup>1</sup>

Added to this they have large financial reserves which enable them to purchase from beyond their own frontiers, for an indefinite period, the materials of which they would still be in need in the event of war.

These various factors, when added together, represent an immense agglomeration of power—the greatest that our globe has ever seen; for power itself, in its double form of power of man over nature and power of man over man, has been multiplied a hundred-fold in the last 150 years. No doubt it is, for the most part, so far as politics are concerned, passive power. It does not stand ready mobilized for use in a power-political contest. Even in the Great War it was never fully mobilized; for mobilization takes time—and, in a democracy, a long time.

One figure is sufficient to illustrate this. How

<sup>1</sup> On all this see Leith, *World Minerals and World Politics* (New York, 1931), and Emeny, *The Strategy of Raw Materials* (New York, 1931).

many guns manufactured in the United States after the entry of the United States into the War in April 1917 were actually used by the American forces on the Western front? The answer to this question is 4 (not 4,000, or 400, or 40, but 4).<sup>1</sup>

But if this vast reservoir of power were at the disposal, not of civilian governments addicted to voluntary systems—if systems these can be called—and to the easy-going methods of peace time, but of the ruler of a totalitarian State, one can imagine the use to which such a ruler would put it.

How was this power secured? How did the present predominance of the English-speaking peoples come into existence?

Germans are apt to answer this question by saying that it is the result of a deliberate process of conquest and empire-building which, in accordance with some historical law or some process of what is called dialectic, they in their turn have a *right* to repeat. And we are apt to meet this by declaring that there never was any such deliberate empire-building design, and that the British Empire was the result of a fit of absence of mind—or, as I suppose we must say, in view of the undeniable facts—of frequently repeated fits of absence of mind. I have never heard an American give a similar explanation for the advance of American power from the Atlantic seaboard to the

<sup>1</sup> See *Report of Sub-Commission A of the Preparatory Committee of the Disarmament Conference*, p. 20. (League of Nations Document, C 739, M 278, 1926, ix.)

Pacific. Nor do Canadians claim that the Canadian Pacific Railway was constructed in a fit of absence of mind.

The truth, of course, is that neither the German nor the traditional British explanation is correct. This vast accumulation of power is due mainly to the enterprise of individual Britons and Americans, the governments following, often very tardily, in their wake. This enterprise was manifested in two distinct waves—the seventeenth-century wave of over-sea trading and settlement, which continued for the two following centuries, and the nineteenth-century wave, due to the Industrial Revolution, the first-fruits of which, owing to the genius of her inventors, were secured for Great Britain.

Thus it came about that during the seventy-five years between the Napoleonic wars and the end of the nineteenth century the power of Britain was in fact, though not in form, the main support of the new international order brought into existence by the Industrial Revolution.

One can call that system of order, in which some of us grew up, by many names, some complimentary, others opprobrious: one can associate it with Free Trade and Progress, or with Freedom for exploitation and with an unscrupulous capitalism. One can say that it gave the world stability and confidence, or that it crystallized it in immobility and injustice. But, from whatever angle one regards it, one must admit that it preserved the world from a major war,

and from apprehension of a major war, from 1815 to 1900.

After 1900 the scene changes, owing to the decline in the degree of British predominance. Two new Powers, the United States and Japan, appear in the overseas world—the first to emerge there in modern times—whilst in Europe another comparative newcomer, Germany, begins to stretch out her hands to add naval power to the European military predominance which she has already attained.

Faced with this challenge—the first German challenge—Britain emerged from her detachment. First, on the initiative of Joseph Chamberlain, she offered her friendship to Germany, and when this was rejected through the influence of the sinister Holstein she turned to France. Germany resented the Entente with France and redoubled her efforts. The Great Powers of Europe became divided into two camps, and out of the tension that thus ensued came the conflict of 1914–18.

In that conflict the German challenge was repelled; but the problem out of which it arose was left unsolved. For in spite of her overwhelming victory Britain did not return to her old nineteenth-century predominance, and thus there was a vacuum in the political system of the world.

The League of Nations was an attempt to fill this vacuum. Its founders hoped to replace the sole predominance of nineteenth-century Britain by a co-operative system in which all the Powers, great

and small, would participate, though, in effect, the Great Powers would be bearing the major share of the burden.

For reasons into which it is impossible to enter in detail within the limits of these pages, that experiment has failed, for the time being: and it is not likely to be revived unless and until the American people are willing to shoulder their proportionate share—a large share, let us say it frankly—of responsibility for world-order. In the interval, a greater burden than in the past falls on the weakened shoulders of Great Britain.

That is the situation in which we have to face the first of our two issues—the German intellectual claim to take over our inherited predominance. What are we to say to it? How are we to meet the German demand for dynamic justice as against the preservation of our existing place and state in the world? How are we to render a moral judgement in this issue between a Great Power of the first rank and a would-be Great Power?

My answer is that *on the case as thus put there is no moral issue involved at all*, and that we ought to refuse to render a moral judgement. One of the commonest mistakes made by well-meaning people in discussions of this kind is to allow themselves to be lured on to their opponents' ground and then to have a verdict snatched from them. *On the case as thus put there is no moral claim*—either for Germany to acquire or for us to retain our power. It is a pure question of force

against force, and the introduction of the term 'justice' is simply misleading. As between an abstract dominating or exploiting Britain and an abstract dominating or exploiting Germany there is nothing to choose.

If, however, we descend from these nebulous heights of speculation to the ground of historical reality and concrete detail, the use by the Germans and Italians of the term 'justice' may well suggest to us the expedient of appealing to something corresponding to a jury. What would be the opinion of a jury of the other Powers, or the other European Powers—our and Germany's near neighbours—on the desirability of the granting the German claim—its desirability from the point of view of the welfare of the world as a whole?

I do not think that there can be any doubt as to the nature of the decision, if it were a free decision, that would be rendered either by the larger or the smaller of the two juries suggested. And I think that it would be rendered not simply because men prefer to bear the evils that they know rather than fly to others that they know not of, but because, in spite of much of which we have to be ashamed, our record as a whole is one of which we have reason to be proud and the rest of the world has reason to approve.

That this is a fair account of the state of world opinion is, I think, clear from the fact that our statesmen are continually being compelled to explain to foreign nations that we are not the world's policemen,

and that we have no desire to extend our responsibilities. In using such language, however, our statesmen are refusing to face the fact that, for several generations before the war, we *were*, in effect, the world's policemen, and that if we abandon that role and retire into some private fastness of our own, however well guarded, there will continue to be disorder and violence in the streets of the world. It is very easy for us to say that the reason why we have abandoned our role as policemen is because we found no one ready to act with us. That is an excuse facilitated by the use of the word 'collectively'—once described by Maitland as 'the smudgiest word in the English language'.<sup>1</sup> Of course the real reason why we found no one—not even France—ready to act with us when we, quite unexpectedly, announced our readiness to act as policemen in September 1935 was the lack of enthusiasm that we had manifested for that role during the previous fifteen years—a lack of enthusiasm with which the attitude of certain religious circles in this country had a good deal to do.

Let us put the question frankly. Ought Great Britain to remain a Great Power, and ought Christians who are British citizens to do their best to enable her to remain so? If we obey Burke's injunction and consider all the circumstances, look at the men and the things, I think there is no doubt as to the answer we ought to give. It is our duty to help to maintain the power of Britain in the world. But it is also our duty

<sup>1</sup> Maitland, *Selected Essays* (Cambridge, 1936), p. 237.

to ensure that that power is well used—well used both in method and in substance: in method, through co-operation with all other peoples who are thinking in terms of world-welfare; in substance through giving active support to policies making for world welfare and in eschewing policies that are anti-social, from the standpoint of the world as a whole.

I know that many Christians will shrink from this conclusion on the ground that the possession of Power—Imperial Power—of the kind that has "come down to us is in itself so dangerous, so full of temptations to evil courses, that it is idle to hope that we can ensure its rightful use and that it is therefore better to abandon it altogether. I admit the force of this argument. It is a call to perpetual vigilance—and we shall examine in the two concluding chapters some of the spheres in which this perpetual vigilance ought particularly to be exercised. But the argument for the abandonment of our position as a Great Power would only be valid if world-conditions were in fact such as to enable us to renounce our traditional responsibilities without risk of disaster for the world as a whole. Some people seem to imagine that we could make this change in our policy without causing any stir in international politics beyond provoking a sigh of relief in certain quarters. On the morning after, the world, from China to Peru, would go on its way as before. That is a *laisser-faire* view of international politics which would provide an easy way out of our difficulties if it were possible for us to hold it. But

unfortunately the facts do not bear it out, as has been sufficiently shown by the widespread and disastrous repercussions resulting from our temporary impotence in recent years and months.

The most thoroughgoing exposition of this *laissez-faire* view with which I am acquainted is contained in a book by that master of abstract reasoning, Bertrand Russell, entitled *Which Way to Peace?*<sup>1</sup> The author, who is not a Christian and is careful to dissociate his argument from any appeal to Christian principle, has the courage to face, and to welcome, the consequences of a course of action for which many Christians have in recent years entertained a vague and cloudy sympathy without stopping to ask themselves what it would really involve in practice. The basis of his argument is that war has become so horrible that it must be avoided at all costs. He sees that certain small Powers, amongst whom he specially singles out Denmark, are living in relative security, whilst we in England, with our widespread possessions, or as I would rather say, responsibilities, are exposed to the full blast of the envy of an aggressor from the air. He therefore proposes that we should set about disbanding the army, navy, and air force, and disposing of India and the Crown colonies, thus reducing ourselves to the political rank of Denmark.

But when he asks himself who is to take over the responsibilities that he would like to see us relinquish he falls into a fallacy surprising for so acute a mind.

<sup>1</sup> London, Michael Joseph, 1936.

We could 'hand over our African possessions', he says, 'to an international authority', adding in a footnote<sup>1</sup> that he is not thinking of the continuance of the present mandate system but of actual administration from Geneva, the international authority being a reformed League of Nations. He does not seem to see that he is arguing in a circle. For if there were really an effective League of Nations ready to take over our African responsibilities, London would assuredly not be in danger of attack from the air: and, conversely, if there are governments and peoples who are prepared to attack London from the air with all the horrors detailed in the earlier pages of the book, it is idle to imagine that they would treat Africans any more mercifully than they are prepared to treat Londoners.

No, we cannot escape from the fact that, if we desire an orderly world, a world in which men and women are free to live their own lives as they would wish to live them, there must be an element of controlling power somewhere. The choice is not between power and no power: it is between different kinds of power. And in the world as it now is there are only two possibilities—power exercised irresponsibly by a victorious autocracy, by some twentieth-century Caesar or Napoleon, or power exercised under the safeguards of responsible government. An abdication by Great Britain of her share of world-power could, as the world now is, only lead to an increase of

<sup>1</sup> p. 138.

arbitrary and irresponsible power wielded by one or more dictators. In the long run, no doubt, the United States would be forced to step in and take over a large part of our heritage rather than see freedom perish from the earth. But in the interregnum there would be suffering on a scale of which recent happenings in China, Abyssinia, Spain, and Czechoslovakia would be a feeble foretaste. And for that suffering we should be blamed, and rightly blamed.

So much in answer to the intellectual challenge put forward in the name of dynamic justice. But our answer, I repeat, should not be a blank and cheerless negation. Our position in the world, if we retain it, involves positive responsibilities, which we cannot shuffle off on to the shoulders of an international authority or any other form of special providence for weary Great Powers. One of the chief of these responsibilities is to be alive to the new duties and new opportunities opened out through every fresh turn of circumstance. The price of predominance is eternal vigilance. To go to sleep at our post is worse even than openly to abandon it.

We come now to the second head of our argument—the question of the use of force.

Here we are plunged into the thick of a controversy which has been the subject of infinite heart-searching and endless debate amongst Christians of various persuasions during recent years. In the space at my disposal within the limits of these pages the discussion must necessarily be brief, but I hope that nothing

here written will be misinterpreted as lacking in consideration for those holding opposite views. For, as a student of history and politics who has done his best to understand what is called the pacifist position, I cannot but feel that it is a product of confusion—and a very simple confusion at that.

The reader will have noticed that in the preceding argument I have spoken throughout of order rather than of peace. I have done so partly because order is the correct and appropriate word. Order is *settled peace*. When it is said that peace is the principal British interest, what is meant is not that this or that local war should be brought to an end, but that there should be an orderly condition in the world, what before 1914 we used to consider a *normal* condition, a condition in which manufacturers and traders and all others whose livelihood depends on planning to meet the world’s future needs can go about their work in reasonable confidence. That is what is meant by the commonly used expression world-peace—not a mere cessation of hostilities, but a permanent condition of stability or order. This in its turn would provide a basis, a real basis very different from the precarious and sandy foundation at Geneva, for the building up of world-institutions.

There are thus three necessary stages in the process leading from the prevailing anarchy to some form of world-organization. The first is peace—the cessation of actual fighting. The second is order, or what is sometimes called the stage of the hue and cry, the

stage at which violence is prevented or punished by the public spirit of the citizen body—in this case the leading democratic peoples. The third stage is the stage of law, the stage at which the habit of co-operation developed through common action in repressing violence has hardened into social rules for the conduct of what by then has become a common social life. It would conduce to clearness if we transposed the current phrase ‘law and order’ and became accustomed to speaking of ‘order and law’; for judges and courts cannot function except within a framework of order. What is the Permanent Court of International Justice at this moment but a rather melancholy signpost to a more orderly future? The official formula ‘peace, order, and good government’ is much more satisfactory, as it neatly packs the three stages into a single sentence.

But there is another reason why I have avoided the use of the word ‘peace’. It is because this simple word, with the associations that it calls up, is responsible for much of the confusion and consequent wrongheadedness which has characterized the attitude of so many professing Christians and some of the organized Christian bodies during the last twenty years. Peace has two meanings—two meanings that are quite distinct. It signifies on the one hand *a state of mind* and on the other *a condition in the outer world*. These two meanings are perfectly familiar to us in ordinary speech. No one ever confuses a justice of the peace with a minister of religion. Nevertheless, they have been constantly—I had almost said wilfully

—confused in the discussion of world-affairs. It is the exception rather than the rule to listen to a sermon or religious address dealing with international relations into which this confusion is not introduced. If it is avoided in the body of the discourse, it will assuredly insinuate itself into the peroration.

And yet to be guilty of such a confusion is not merely to fall into a venial intellectual error. It is to reveal a condition which I think it is not too strong to describe as spiritual blindness. For is it not sinning against the light to encourage Christians to put peace, order, and good government on the same plane as the peace of the Kingdom of Heaven? Is there not an element of arrogance and Pharisaical self-sufficiency in failing to realize that a soldier can be at peace in the trenches or in forgetting that some of those on whom the Church has bestowed the title of Saint have followed the profession of arms? Was Wordsworth guilty of self-contradiction when, on hearing of the death of Nelson, he composed his lines on the Happy Warrior, who

Doomed to go in company with Pain  
And Fear and Bloodshed, miserable train  
Turns his necessity to glorious gain . . .  
And through the heat of conflict keeps the law  
In calmness made, and sees what he foresaw.

Do not misunderstand me. I am fully aware that throughout history there has always been what one might call an underground stream of pacifism. There has always been a small company of Christians who

had devoutly convinced themselves that the use of force in social relations was contrary to the command of the Master, and who therefore felt a particular repugnance to the use of force in its most highly organized form, military force. Nor do I fail to recognize that in their individual lives these men and women have often been, indeed have generally been, the fine flower of Christian virtue. But that does not alter the fact that they have won this inner peace either in defiance of intellectual consistency or through the deliberate renunciation of the full obligations of citizenship. For it only requires a moment's reflection to realize that, once you accept the command to render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, you cannot disapprove *in principle* of the use of force. You may indeed seek in every possible way to increase the area of persuasion and conciliation and to diminish the occasions for the resort to command and enforcement. You may turn the police force into a company of guides, philosophers, and friends, and transform prisons into agencies of character-building and vocational training. You may soften the style of the tax collector till his method of extraction resembles that of an up-to-date dentist. But however far you succeed in pushing this ameliorative technique, if you are a serious student of Caesar's business you cannot deny him the use of force as the ultimate expedient.

No liberal-minded man will be inclined to do violence to the convictions of this small devout minority. But as students of politics we are, I think,

justified in questioning their intellectual consistency; for it is plainly impossible for them, with the best will in the world, to apply the principle of non-violence over the whole range of their social relations, unless indeed they are prepared to limit these as rigidly as the Premonstratensians. No one, for instance, could make both ends meet in any business enterprise if he was not prepared to enforce his will against uneconomic demands, whether proceeding from wage-earners or shareholders.

This suggests the question, What are the limits of force? Can a line be drawn between naked force and other less open but often more effective forms of pressure? Once this question is asked it becomes clear that the non-resisting way of life originated in a state of society very different from that of the large-scale world of to-day, and that the task of applying its fixed principle to modern conditions presents innumerable complications. There is therefore something capricious and even—if the word may be forgiven—something arbitrary in the claim that is put forward for the right to pick and choose as to which particular laws are an offence against the non-resister's conscience. If all citizens were to adopt this method of contracting out, as it were, of obedience to laws which they disliked, whilst benefiting by the community's observance of the remainder, government would become impossible. Many of us would cease to pay our taxes and all would be losers alike through the ensuing anarchy.

That the non-resisters' case is so often allowed to go by default is therefore not due to the fact that it is difficult to answer. The real reason, in this country at any rate, is that it seems ungracious to do so. The members of the Society of Friends contribute so much more to the community than they withhold from it that our feelings of respect silence any inclination to censoriousness, and we refrain from stirring up the dust of what would we feel be a futile and odious controversy; for it is idle to argue with a deep-seated religious conviction.

But it is a very different matter when round this numerically insignificant central nucleus of conscientious, if intellectually inconsistent, non-resisters there is formed a large penumbra of persons who, I think, can best be described as pseudo-Quakers: twenty or more years ago they were known as wartime Quakers. These are people who have arrived, or claim to have arrived, at the Quaker position, but without the aid of the inner light. It would be interesting to analyse and to classify the various types of pseudo-Quakerism and the different conceptions of peace which they espouse. They are indeed a very mixed company, the flotsam and jetsam of the period of intellectual confusion and spiritual disintegration through which we are passing. It would need the pen of a Dante or of a Bunyan to do justice to the non-Christian literature of pacifism and to the many and curious forms of demoralization which it exhibits—from simple souls like Mr. Faintheart and Mr. Feeble-

mind to the ingenious Mr. Pliable and the self-assured and plausible Mr. Worldly Wiseman.

But we must not linger over this painful scene. What concerns us here, as students of international politics, is the havoc that these irresponsible and vociferous camp-followers of the Society of Friends have wrought, during the crucial post-War period, on well-meaning but unthinking minds, especially in this country. It is not too much to say that they have bedevilled British public opinion and, by so doing, have brought shame upon our country and let loose a flood of suffering and evil upon the world.

There are three respects in particular in which public opinion has been misled. The first is in regard to the League of Nations. It has been a great misfortune that, through a mistaken conception of tolerance or comprehensiveness, the pseudo-Quakers have been allowed in this country—and, I believe, in this country almost alone—to represent themselves as supporters of the League of Nations. They are, of course, among its most dangerous opponents. The League of Nations is not a peace-organization in their sense of the word. Those who claim that it is are either unfamiliar with the Covenant or arrogant to themselves the right to pick and choose among its articles. The object of the founders of the League was the effective prevention of war, and the heart of the Covenant is the obligation of mutual assistance between members of the League for their protection against attack. That this obligation should have been allowed to slip out of sight in

this country was no doubt partly due to reluctance on the part of our statesmen to keep unpleasant facts before our minds. But it was also very largely due to the pervading influence of pseudo-Quakers in the press, on the platform, and in the pulpit. I need not re-emphasize the unhappy effect which this distortion of the purpose of the Covenant has had on our relations with other members of the League, especially those to whom our slipshod intellectual methods are unfamiliar, and who have therefore been inclined to attribute to deliberate hypocrisy and dishonesty what was in most cases just a rather convenient form of ignorance or forgetfulness.

The second respect in which the pseudo-Quakers have caused havoc is in their attitude towards armaments. Here they have been the high priests of what can only be called a cult of materialism. Armaments, they kept on reiterating, are the cause of war. If you wish for peace, abolish armaments. Those who argued in this simple fashion were guilty of several elementary mistakes. Firstly, they ascribed to dead materials a potency which could only spring from human minds and wills. Armaments are not good and bad in themselves—one is almost ashamed to enunciate such a platitude—they are good or bad according to the policy and motives of those who direct their use. Competition in armaments is no doubt wasteful, unproductive, and burdensome to the tax-payer: on that ground therefore, if on no other, it is to be deplored. But it is futile to indulge in diatribes

against guns and tanks and battleships. One must look behind symptoms to causes, and discover where, how, and why the motive of competition originated. That raises issues of policy; and policies, unlike guns, can be submitted to moral judgement. Moreover, to ignore policies, as so many good Christians have done, and to concentrate on the externals of armament was not only senseless in itself: it was also a psychological blunder of the first magnitude. For it placed in the forefront of discussion the most delicate and contentious of all international issues, a veritable apple of discord, an issue touching national pride and national interests at their most sensitive points. It must be left for historians to estimate the degree in which the relations between the Powers were exacerbated in the post-War period by the introduction of the issue of disarmament. But I think it can safely be said that if that issue had been kept *both out of the Peace Treaties and out of the Covenant*—and their insertion in both the one and the other was due to the influence of pseudo-Quakerism—the atmosphere of the nineteen-twenties and the early thirties would have been very different and much more favourable for constructive policies of international co-operation. We ought not to forget that the clauses in the Treaty of Versailles imposing permanent limitations on the German army were inserted by the British Prime Minister in response to the demand of British public opinion and were strongly opposed, on sound practical grounds, by Marshal Foch.

I have referred to the inclusion of a disarmament clause in the Covenant. For this American, rather than British, public opinion must take the responsibility; for it was part of the original American draft, whilst official circles in this country, remembering The Hague Conferences, were always alive to the dangers involved in raising the subject. But very few of those in this country who espoused the cause of disarmament in the name of the Covenant did so in accordance with its terms. The article lays it down that 'the maintenance of Peace requires the reduction of national armaments to the lowest point *consistent with national safety and the enforcement by common action of international obligations*'. But the result of the disarmament movement in this country has been that our armaments were reduced *below* the level of national safety and *well below* the level that would have enabled us to take, I do not say our traditional, but even our proportional, share in the enforcement of international obligations. Here again, the pseudo-Quakers played fast and loose with the letter and spirit of the Covenant.

The third respect in which the pseudo-Quakers have beclouded opinion in this country is in their general attitude towards war. They have been so impressed with the horrors of the last war and, latterly, so apprehensive at the possibility of a new outbreak in which civilians would be exposed to equal danger with soldiers, that they have adopted one expedient after another for keeping the ugly

thing at arm's length. In this way some of them have drifted into the habit of thinking of war as a kind of disease or epidemic to be investigated as a social phenomenon in and for itself, and to be stamped out or avoided, as the case may be, in the same way as other natural pests. Others, realizing that this is altogether too crude a way of regarding historical events, seek for an explanation in the recesses of abnormal psychology and try to make us believe that the outbreak of hostilities in 1914 was due to unconscious sadism in high places. All such explanations—if explanations they can be called—are on the wrong track. There is nothing mysterious, nothing requiring a morbid or esoteric explanation, in war as a social phenomenon. War is the result, the natural and inevitable result, of an unresolved difference of opinion between two governments when one or both sides wishes to push this conflict to an issue and there is no outside power to deter it from doing so. The difference between present-day wars and past wars lies in the greatly increased power which governments can bring to bear in order to enforce their will upon an adversary, and in the greatly increased damage which they are capable of inflicting, whatever their chances of ultimate victory. It is this so-called totalitarian feature of modern war, itself a natural consequence of the Machine Age, that has armed unscrupulous governments with a powerful instrument of blackmail, an instrument which the pseudo-Quakers have done much to render more effective.

Thus it is that the prevalence of pseudo-Quakerism in the English-speaking countries has synchronized with the rise to power elsewhere of rulers for whom violence is second nature and for whom scruples are unknown, men who, as they would have us feel, would not shrink from causing the most widespread suffering and destruction in order to further their purposes. No doubt the emergence of such men and their satellites from the mass is an interesting phenomenon for psychologists to contemplate. But the existence of such types in society is nothing new and their ascent to power, in the existing political circumstances, is not difficult to explain. It is indeed exactly what the historian would expect in an age of transition from one system of order to another. It certainly does not justify psychologists in suggesting that mankind has entered upon a period of degeneracy or Christians in relapsing from the excessive optimism of twenty years ago into an even more exaggerated mood of pessimism. All that we are justified in concluding, as students of history and politics, is that the governments and peoples of the world—and especially of the leading peoples of the world—have not yet adopted adequate measures to cope with what is a new political problem: the intensive character and far-reaching impact of modern warfare. If and when adequate safeguards are adopted, as they can be very easily and as they could have been years ago if Christians had been united in realizing the need for them, we shall cease to hear that our Western civiliza-

tion is staggering to its doom. But it will not follow that men and women, set free from the apprehensions which beset us to-day, will actually be leading better lives. It will simply mean that a political remedy has been found for a political problem—that one difficult piece of Caesar's business has been successfully accomplished. But that will only leave the way open for Caesar to deal with other problems, some of them even more difficult and making greater, because more continuous, demands on the energies of Christian people.

It is with certain selected problems of this order that we shall be concerned in the two remaining chapters.

## VI

### *OUR ENGLISH BURDEN*

DURING the last three chapters we have been discussing various aspects of international politics in which Christian leadership in this country has tended to go astray through hasty and ill-considered attempts to apply Christian principles *directly* to particular problems without a sufficient understanding of their complexity.

To-day we abandon these side-tracks and come back to the main road, to the question which we set ourselves at the beginning of the third chapter: *What should be our attitude as Christians and British citizens in regard to international relations?*

Let us begin by taking a bird's-eye view of the situation in which we find ourselves.

Through the developments of the last four centuries, and particularly as a result of the Industrial Revolution, this island has become one of the two chief centres of power and of wealth on the face of the globe. We concluded in the last chapter that, as the world now is, it would not be right, or indeed possible, for us to transfer this power and the external sources of this wealth to other hands. The responsibility, we said, rests squarely upon our own shoulders. Let us now consider what that responsibility is and what it entails for us as Christians.

The power that has devolved upon us in this way is an arbitrary power; that is to say, it is not subject

to the control which, according to our own constitutional standards, ought to accompany every exercise of power. Every wielder of power in this island, from the highest to the lowest, is accountable to the House of Commons, and thus to the people as a whole. Power in our domestic relations is power encased in a framework of law. This island is a Realm of Law. But in the world as a whole there is as yet no framework of law. Thus the power that we exercise in the world as a people is accountable to no one. We are the sole judges of the use that we make of it. *We do not sufficiently reflect as Christians on the problem that is thus involved.* No one will maintain that it is easier for us to maintain a high standard of conduct in our external relations than in our domestic relations. Human nature being what it is, it is more difficult for us to be fair or just or honourable or generous to an outsider than to some one with whom we are already associated by a tie of friendship or of customary intercourse. In the nature of things, then, the need for control and accountability in external relations is greater than it is in domestic affairs. Yet it is just in that difficult and dangerous sphere of conduct that there are no constitutional safeguards to restrain us. Does not this indicate that it is in these very matters that we, as Christians, have a special duty, and that Christian leadership should be specially vigilant?

Let me pause here to clear up an objection which some readers may be inclined to raise against what

has just been said. Was not the League of Nations, it will be asked, an attempt to control our imperial power, to encase it in a framework of international law? Certainly it was: but the event proved that the Great Powers are not yet either sufficiently agreed amongst themselves or sufficiently law-abiding in disposition to enable such a system to be established. This is clearly shown by the record of the Mandates Commission.

The mandate system was an attempt to establish a method of accountability to an international authority for a small portion of the power that we and certain other peoples exercise in Asia, Africa, and the South Seas. But in spite of the zeal and disinterestedness of some members of the commission and of its permanent staff, its record as a whole reveals how impossible it is, in the world as it now is, to submit a power so formidable and far-reaching as ours to any form of external regulation.

This is well illustrated in certain too-little-known episodes of our mandate for Iraq. In 1925 we persuaded the Council of the League to assign the disputed district of Mosul with its oil-fields to Iraq rather than to Turkey, by giving it to be understood that we would continue to exercise the mandate for twenty-five years. This had been the principal condition attached by an impartial League Commission to their recommendation that the district should be given to Iraq rather than to Turkey. Little more than four years afterwards, in November 1929, we

informed the League of our intention to support the application of Iraq for membership, i.e. to terminate the mandate. The Mandates Commission and the Council of the League, though somewhat taken aback at the rapid progress of the Iraquis towards political maturity, eventually acquiesced in our policy, but only after washing their hands publicly of any moral responsibility should anything untoward occur. As a result, in 1932, after seven of the contemplated twenty-five years had elapsed, the mandate<sup>4</sup> was replaced by an alliance, with safeguards for our oil interests and our air communications with India, but with none for the minority population in the recently ceded area or in the country as a whole. Within a few months a massacre occurred and our moral responsibility was deeply involved. It is only fair to add that in this case the Archbishop of Canterbury did everything within his power to safeguard the interests of the population whom our rulers thus betrayed. But, like the Mandates Commission, he found Whitehall too strong for him.

To discuss the administration of our Palestine mandate would carry me too far. I would only ask those who still believe that it is possible to overtrump a Great Power by some ace produced out of a Geneva sleeve to ask themselves what part the Mandates Commission is likely to play in deciding the future of that country. Both in Iraq and in Palestine, just as in the rest of our imperial affairs, the decision and responsibility rest substantially with ourselves.

It would indeed be well if it were more generally realized that there has always been a large element of make-believe in the working of the mandate system. This is most clearly revealed on the annual occasion when the Council receives and approves, or amends, the proceedings of the Mandates Commission. There is an old maxim of law to the effect that no one should be judge in his own case. But when the report on the administration of the Mandatory Powers is presented, it is *their* representatives who sit at the table to receive it, and the representative of the Mandates Commission looks very small and humble beside them. If the Council of the League were really a Gouncil—that is, a body inspired by a corporate consciousness and a sense of common responsibility—the British and French representatives would, on this occasion, relinquish their seats at the centre of the horseshoe and retire to a seat befitting their status as examinees. But such a procedure has never even been thought of. On the contrary, the Foreign Ministers of the Mandatory Powers, well primed by their Colonial Offices, are particularly formidable on these occasions. It is as though an Inspector of Schools, in presenting his report on a group of schools to the Board of Education, found the very headmasters with whom that report dealt installed in the office to receive and pass judgement, in their turn, on his criticism.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Since these words were written, the Colonial Secretary has added point to them by telling the House of Commons (July 20, 1939) that the British Government 'has at least as much right to express its views about Palestine on the League Council as any other nation.'

What is true of the exercise of our power is equally true of the use we make of our riches. Inside the country the influence of wealth, subtle and all-pervading though it is, is counteracted by our democratic institutions, and at least the grosser forms of abuse are held in check. But beyond these shores no such safeguards exist. Our economic power is virtually irresponsible, subject only to minor restraints in the form of international agreements, themselves terminable at our will whenever they may seem to us no longer conducive to our interests. There comes back vividly to my mind in this connexion a scene in the anteroom of the Foreign Minister of a sovereign and highly civilized European republic some fifteen years ago. There were two of us there, my companion being an eminent representative of British finance. It was late in the morning and the time fixed for each of our appointments was long past. Finally my companion's patience evaporated, and he burst out: 'What in the world is this tinpot republic doing to keep the Bank of England waiting over the luncheon hour?' The ejaculation has stuck in my memory as a characteristic utterance of God's Englishman in a latter-day make-up.

We have indeed become so much accustomed to the irresponsible exercise of our economic power that we seldom take the trouble even to make use of such safeguards as exist under our law against its abuse. There must be many thousands of professing Christians in this country who draw dividends every

quarter from capital invested in foreign lands. It would be interesting to know how many of them recognize that they have a personal responsibility as Christians for the stewardship of their money: that it is their duty to watch over its use, and, in particular, to ensure that the labourers employed through it are working under fair conditions. The responsibility of a possessor of tea or rubber shares for the labourers—the so-called coolies—employed on his estates, or of an owner of mining shares on the Rand or at Kimberley for the detribalized Africans herded together there, is as real and as clear as his responsibility towards the domestic servants or the gardeners in his own immediate household. Yet it is not often that we hear of company meetings held under the shadow of St. Paul's being used by conscientious shareholders to ensure that their enterprises are being carried on under conditions which, if they were here at home, would cause them no shame. Nor are considerations of this kind much in evidence in the Stock Exchange or in commercial and financial journals even of the highest type. Is it going too far to say that international economic relations are practically a virgin field for Christian principles and for the individual Christian conscience? Every now and then, as in the rubber plantations on the Putamayo in Brazil or in the cocoa plantations in the Portuguese West African islands, or more recently in our own West Indies, some crying scandal is brought to light and public opinion is stirred for a short time on that

particular issue. But for the rest, our overseas enterprises continue on their old courses.

In this connexion I should like to draw attention to the system of fixed trusts, by which investors divide their risks by spreading their capital over a number of separate concerns. This device when applied, as it is applied, to investments in distant lands makes it practically impossible for the investor to follow up the use made of his money; for he cannot pursue each fraction of it to the individual mine or plantation. The fact that such a system has become widespread without, so far as I know, exciting public criticism on ethical grounds reveals how completely the conception of the stewardship of riches has passed out of the public consciousness—or I suppose I should say, the bourgeois consciousness.

There is, of course, another way in which Christian public opinion could be brought to bear on these problems. The International Labour Organization is an instrument ready to hand for the general levelling up of labour conditions in the backward parts of the world, both through its encouragement of the principle of trade unionism and through the framing of definite conventions, such as that dealing with forced labour. But the International Labour Organization has, for League of Nations enthusiasts, always been something of a Cinderella. And certainly the leaders of British business and the investing public generally have never gone out of their way to welcome it as a much-needed ally in their task of

facing the responsibilities of our imperial economic power.

British imperialism, then, both political and economic, is a stark and undeniable fact—as stark and undeniable as German rearmament and even more challenging to us as Christians.

Here let us pause to remark that we cannot evade this challenge by attributing imperialism to some mysterious set of impersonal forces and by casting the blame for it upon some 'system'. No doubt there is such a phenomenon as international capitalism. No doubt American and French and even Dutch and Swiss business men are tempted to adopt arrogant attitudes and to make an unscrupulous use of their wealth in their relations with poorer countries. No doubt, also, it would be very desirable to curb the irresponsible activities of capitalists of all nationalities by appropriate international regulations. All this is true: but it is not to the point. Our own particular concern is not with capitalism as such but with *British* political and economic power. And I am afraid that we must remind our Communist friends that the problem of God's Englishman would not be solved by the nationalization of the Bank of England, or even by that of all our national means of production, distribution, and exchange. There is plenty of evidence to show that a man does not cease to be God's Englishman when he puts on a red tie.

If, then, we are to be honest in facing the problem of the Christian attitude in world affairs, we must

begin by concentrating our attention on our predominant position in the world. For that is the central problem. From it proceed innumerable ramifications which it is impossible for us here to follow up. Our predominance manifests itself in many forms: in government, in trade, in education, in recreation, in philanthropy. Everywhere it has created difficulties and maladjustments. Some of these are of such long standing and have become so familiar that they are never discussed and hardly even recognized. They are like painless ulcers.

One such instance that occurs to me is the position of organized British Christianity in India in its close relationship with our imperial position. A stranger attending certain religious ceremonies might be forgiven for thinking that Christianity was the special religion of the occupying garrison rather than a faith that had come back to the continent of its origin. There is an incongruity here which I do not say should excite our condemnation, but of which we certainly ought to be more thoroughly aware. We can be sure that it does not escape the notice of our Indian friends, whether Christian or non-Christian.

There are many other maladjustments, greater or smaller, of the same kind. Some of them, such as our predominance in the sphere of armaments and physical force, are familiar enough. Indeed, there is a tendency to dilate overmuch on the grosser aspects of our ascendancy and to neglect its subtler and more insidious forms. Psychologists might be inclined to

characterize the enthusiasm with which British Christians concentrated on the issue of disarmament as an instance of the working of the escape mechanism. It is so much more comfortable and satisfying to fix the blame on to dead instruments than to examine into living attitudes and prejudices.

Let us, then, try to face the central question.

We are one of the two pillars of world order. In the nineteenth century we were the main pillar. We are universally respected: for wealth commands respect. We are—or were until recently and shall soon be again—universally feared: for power commands fear. Nor do this fear and this respect rest entirely upon our power and our wealth. They rest upon the memory of our past achievements and a recognition of our good intentions. Nobody credits us with a lust for conquest or attributes to us a taste for brutality. The weak of the world appeal to us as their policeman, and the poor of the world rely upon our philanthropy. Other peoples, like ourselves, have stains on their record. But we are the only people—at least in the Old World—for whom a Mansion House fund covers a multitude of sins.

*And yet the world does not like us.*

I do not propose to analyse in detail the particular reactions of individual peoples towards us. These would be very complex and the resultant of different experiences in each case. But, if we leave aside individual peoples and confine ourselves to the broad general divisions of mankind, the proposition, I fear,

stands out only too clearly. Do the Latin peoples like us? Do the Slav peoples like us? Do the Asiatic peoples like us? Do even the other English-speaking peoples like us? Is it not an Australian, one of our own kith and kin, and a former Rhodes scholar to boot, who has told us of his fellow countrymen that 'it frequently occurs that those who are most intensely British have a special dislike for the English', adding, as a gracious after-thought, that 'nevertheless it is quite possible to be pro-British without being anti-English'.<sup>1</sup>

Why are we not liked? The answer springs easily to the lips—too easily. Because we are misunderstood. But why are we misunderstood? Because we do not take the trouble to explain ourselves. We lock our treasure in a casket with a forbidding exterior and we expect the foreigner to guess what is inside. Worse than that: we do not even *invite* him to guess; for we do not know how to deliver such an invitation. We do not know how to exchange words with him. We are tongue-tied in his presence.

You may ask: What has this to do with religion, and how can Christian leadership help to remedy this embarrassing situation? My answer is that it has a great deal to do with religion—with the religion which professes the principle of human brotherhood—and that it concerns our religious leaders much more closely than the more technical problems of international relations such as disarmament and arbitration. Why is the Englishman a standing enigma for

<sup>1</sup> W. K. Hancock, *Australia* (1930), p. 66.

foreign observers? Why is it that our greatness—our greatness in literature and our greatness in politics—is a *problem*, a matter for painstaking research, almost, one might say, for excavation? How is it that for even well-informed foreigners—I am thinking here especially of Slavs and Latins—it is a matter of surprise, sometimes of ill-concealed surprise, to discover that a native of this island can be intelligent, can be interested in ideas, can express himself coherently and even fluently—to discover that we have universities which are more than playgrounds or hunting boxes or annexes to golf courses, which aim at being homes of real thinking and centres of intellectual stimulation, to discover that an Oxford man, for instance, can occasionally hold his own in argument with a graduate of Toulouse or Bologna or Brno or Cracow or Cluj or Tartu?

I am afraid that the answer to these questions is not difficult to find. We avoid that answer because it is disagreeable—and none too creditable to our Christianity. Let me steer you towards it gently by recounting another personal experience. Some thirty years ago, in the early days of the Workers' Educational Association, I was trying to induce a friend of mine, a leading Christian layman, to take some part in its activities, not so much for what he had to give to working-class audiences, though that was considerable, as for what he would receive from them. It would, I argued, widen his experience and help to bridge the gulf—at that time wider than it is to-day—

between the two Englands, Disraeli's 'two nations'. My friend accepted my reasoning, but said that he could not face the ordeal of addressing a group of working men and women on an intellectual theme. He had never discussed ideas except with people of his own social class. To that I replied that, if that was so, it was high time that he should begin. Why not begin, I suggested, with his own butler? Thus driven to bay, he answered with a tone of pathos in his voice which put a decisive end to the argument: "*but how does one talk to one's butler?*"

How indeed? *And how does one talk to a foreigner?* It is the same problem in both cases. The obstacle is not embarrassment, not just plain human shyness. It is a sense of superiority. Let us be bold and say that, in the case of the butler it is class prejudice and in the case of the foreigner it is class prejudice with a difference, but usually not a very great difference. If we look into ourselves I suspect that we shall find that *How does one talk to one's butler?* is closely related, psychologically, to our attitude in international relations—in personal international relations. There are many international variants of *How does one talk to one's butler?* Here are three, enough for the present stage of our argument: *How does one talk to a native?* *How does one talk to a dago?* *How, in spite of the Statute of Westminster, does one talk to a colonial?*

Now, perhaps, the reader is beginning to understand why, in spite of our good intentions, our kind hearts, and our Mansion House funds, we are not loved

by other peoples. No one in the world, whether he be a Latin or a Slav, an Eskimo or a South Sea islander, likes being talked down to. Still less does any human being like being *looked* down on. A silent look is often more eloquent than language. There is no more embittering factor in international relations than condescension. Hatred—good honest red-blooded hatred—is as balm compared with it. To patronize any one who has a claim to be your equal is to make him an enemy for life. If there is one article among our personal belongings on which a prohibitive export tax should be levied it is our superiority complex. It has wrought havoc for us in Ireland, on the continent of Europe from Calais to Moscow, in the United States, in the self-governing Dominions and, last but not least, in Asia. Nor can any one who has watched the activities of our fellow countrymen at Geneva year by year put his hand on his heart and declare that even there it has never served us in bad stead.

Perhaps I may be allowed once more to take refuge in reminiscence. When we were driven off the gold standard in September 1931 the League Assembly was in session. The shock caused by the news was, of course, tremendous, for 'safe as the Bank of England' was a watchword on which most of the delegates of the fifty-odd countries had been brought up. Their feelings were mixed. They were sorry, because they were concerned for the effect on their own peoples. But they were glad because, for once, at long last,

Great Britain had become an object for their pity—a pity which found discreet but unmistakable expression in their comments. To be able to patronize Great Britain! What a novel and exquisite pleasure! And, for the members of the British delegation, what an exquisite form of torture!

Again you will ask—What has this specially to do with Christianity? Let me answer by reminding you of the class-structure of English society, whence these baleful attitudes in our international relations proceed, and the place, or places, traditionally occupied in it by organized religion. Once more let me have recourse to anecdote. Years ago, in the course of some educational work in the Midlands, I made the acquaintance of a working-class leader, prominent in the district, a man of exceptional intelligence, honesty, and common sense, who was particularly and, as I thought, unreasonably bitter in his attitude towards the employing class. One day he revealed to me the secret of his attitude. It arose from the fact that the personal contact established in business negotiations during the week was rudely interrupted on Sundays. 'When my wife and I are on our way to chapel,' he said, 'and we happen to meet one of these employers or managers going to church with their wives, they refuse to recognize us—and you expect me not to feel bitter about it!' What a paradox! Sunday undoing a work of co-operation carried on happily during the week! The religion of brotherhood as an active instrument of social disruption and ill feeling!

Alternative facilities for worship transformed into citadels for this or that section of the community—the Church a citadel of snobbery, the Chapel a rallying-point for an inferiority complex!

It may be urged that these attitudes are passing away. No doubt they are. But their evil effects live after them; for there is nothing to which men and social groups are more prone than to make those beneath them taste of the lash that they have experienced from their superiors. In the seventeenth century it was the Anglican parson who laboured under an inferiority complex in his relations with the country gentleman. Let me recall to you a few sentences of Macaulay's immortal description of the country clergyman of that age:

'Sometimes the reverend man nailed up the apricots; and sometimes he curried the coach horses. He cast up the farrier's bills. He walked ten miles with a message or a parcel. He was permitted to dine with the family; but he was expected to content himself with the plainest fare. He might fill himself with the corned beef and the carrots: but, as soon as the tarts and cheesecakes made their appearance, he quitted his seat, and stood aloof till he was summoned to return thanks for the repast, from a great part of which he had been excluded.'

Who can be surprised that under this provocation the reverend gentleman of the Anglican persuasion passed on the badge of inferiority to his Nonconformist brother, and that the class-structure which has been such an obstacle amongst laymen to the achievement

of real democracy in this country should have been reproduced in miniature in the mutual relations of our Church bodies. And who is there who, with these unhappy realities of our domestic situation in his mind, can fail to observe their repercussions in the attitude of Englishmen, lay and ecclesiastical alike, in handling international issues and in their personal relations with representatives of other countries and even of other Churches?

Of late years a new and particularly embittering element has entered in to envenom an already envenomed situation, to heap a new complex on the top of a mass already sufficiently high—a super-superiority complex, if the reader will forgive this awkward term. I refer to what is commonly known as colour-prejudice. Let us be more scientific, and call it the Pigmentation Escape Mechanism.

We need not waste time over the crude vulgarity and still cruder ignorance which assign superiority or inferiority to human beings according to their physical characters. Even if it were scientifically proved that certain physical characteristics carried with them intellectual or moral qualities that sociologists were justified in describing as superior, we would still not be justified as Christians in looking down on the peoples or races who were not so endowed. No decent man or woman, let alone a Christian, looks down on a blind man or a cripple. But, of course, the biologists have produced no such proof, and it seems most unlikely that they will do so in the future.

There is, indeed, some striking evidence in the contrary direction. Those, for instance, who are best acquainted with the Australian aborigines—one of the most primitive peoples now on the planet—have been surprised not merely by their intelligence in dealing with matters that fall within their habitual experience, but also by their adaptability and readiness to learn. Thus our task as Christians is greatly simplified: for equality of race—the provisional conclusion of biology—goes easily along with the brotherhood of man.

Nevertheless, we all know that equality of race is a principle more often honoured in the breach than in the observance, even by professing Christians.

Why is this? Why in this particular field does public opinion so obstinately resist the Christian precept of brotherhood—public opinion, let me add, among the English-speaking peoples, for the so-called ingrained prejudice is by no means universal?

The answer, I believe, is largely to be found in a simple intellectual confusion, a confusion encouraged by our laziness and our slipshod habits of thinking—habits in which we are particularly prone to indulge in the case of rather delicate issues.

It is, broadly speaking, true that the standard of life among the non-white peoples is lower than that among the English-speaking branch of the white peoples. This creates a problem of economic competition in international trade; and where the two populations live side by side in the same community, this

economic problem is of course greatly intensified. There is therefore a sound reason for statesmanship to seek to circumvent this difficulty by keeping the two populations apart, for mere minimum wage laws would probably not be effective. This is the basis—a basis which I do not wish here to contest—for the immigration policies of such countries as the United States, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand. Those policies are not necessarily based on any theory of racial inequality: they are, indeed, in the case of the British Dominions, expressly based upon the opposite principle of reciprocity. They can be criticized on the ground that they fail to take adequate account of the existing world situation in respect of population and resources. But they are not directly open to criticism on the ground of Christian principle.

Here I would make one reservation on a point of terminology. The term 'White Australia' seems to me to be, with all respect to my Australian friends, a rather clumsy effort in political shorthand. If I am not mistaken, it fails to do justice to the policy of which it purports to be a description. Those who favour what is called the White Australia policy desire to see a substantially homogeneous Australia with adequate safeguards for fair living conditions. Any one who can succeed in packing this social and economic policy into a happier and more accurate political slogan would be rendering a service both to Australia and to the rest of the world—not least to Asia.

The White Australia policy, as I have just characterized it, is not purely economic in character. It is actuated in part—indeed in large part—by social considerations. On its economic side colour-prejudice is simply a convenient shelter against the competition of low-grade labour. Where that shelter is not available other pretexts are found. On its social side the issue is rather more complicated. But here, too, there is an intellectual confusion involved.

*How would you like your sister to marry a coloured man?* That is the usual gambit with which discussion on this subject is opened. There are plenty of obvious retorts. How would you like your sister to marry a dago? How would you like your sister to marry a crossing sweeper? How would you like your sister to marry a Nonconformist? In each case the question, as so framed, reveals the existence of a strong social prejudice—prejudice in the literal sense of the word, for the coloured man, dago, crossing sweeper, or Nonconformist is implied to be ineligible as a brother-in-law irrespective of his particular personality. He is pre-judged to be ineligible.

Now far be it from me to condemn outright those who use such language as bad Christians or even as bad citizens. The existence of these social prejudices in certain communities is a fact, a fact entailing certain social consequences for those who ride roughshod over them. As Christians we may deplore such prejudices, but as family counsellors it would be wrong for us to pretend that they do not exist and may

continue to exist for a long time, certainly long enough to make life more difficult for the children of such a marriage. As statesmen or citizens, knowing the strength of such prejudices, we may even be justified in accepting them as, for the time being, unalterable, and in deliberately favouring social homogeneity as against social diversity as the lesser evil in the existing temper of the community.

But when allowance has been made for all these opportunist considerations, it remains true<sup>4</sup> that we have no right to employ social prejudice as a cover for public injustice. Whatever may be our private feelings, we have no right to discriminate publicly against any class of persons in the community in order to promote some private purpose or to gratify some private feeling. *To act in that way is to confuse private relations with public relations, to turn a private sentiment into a public policy.* To dislike any one or to seek to avoid any one's company is my own private affair. To advise my sister to do likewise is within my own right. That is no business of the law. But if, in order to protect my sister from the risk of making an undesirable acquaintance, I combine with others to debar a section of my fellow citizens from the free and equal use of public facilities, such as hotels, theatres, libraries, trams, and trains, I am going beyond my right and expose myself to censure, both as a Christian and as an inheritor of British freedom; for I am in process of creating a caste-bound society. And if, as has happened in some parts of the English-

speaking world, the law has been used to reinforce such a social prejudice, one can only say that, in these cases, the law itself is going beyond its proper sphere and being used as a cover for injustice. In such a situation it would certainly seem to be a clear Christian duty to uphold the dignity of human personality and to support the claim for equal citizenship.

Those who seek to make use of the Pigmentation Escape Mechanism cannot have it both ways. They can exclude the coloured man, or, for the matter of that, the so-called dago, from the community in the name of social homogeneity. But if he is in the community, either as an old inhabitant or as an immigrant, and contributes to it by his labour, he cannot be excluded from it for other purposes. To deny him equality before the law or equality of opportunity or the use of common public facilities for fear of the use that he may make of his freedom is to go counter to the whole tradition of British liberty—not to speak of the teachings of the Christian gospel. Liberty is always dangerous. And, as for Christianity, it *ought* always to be dangerous. When it is not so, there is a case for inquiry.

What can we do to liberate ourselves from these inhibitions that make it so difficult for us to get on to terms with other peoples?

It is not for me to suggest a course of psychotherapy. But one or two thoughts occur to me drawn from my own observation.

In the first place, we must realize that we are no longer alone in our political task—if we ever were. We are too apt to think of ourselves as occupying a lonely eminence of power and responsibility, with the smaller peoples gathered somewhere in a herd beneath us. We have to realize that it *is* possible for the powerful of the earth to be sociable, and indeed that sociability is, in the twentieth-century world, the world of democracy and self-determination, a very necessary adjunct to power. The age of imperial soliloquy is over. We can no longer exercise an *independent* greatness. If political greatness still lies before us, as we must all hope, it will be an *interdependent* greatness. Our power will be linked, is already linked, with the overseas Dominions, with the other democracies, and with numerous other peoples. They are all our social equals, though they may not be our equals in power. We must learn to think of them as equals. Until we think of them as equals we shall never succeed as treating them as equals, for, to our credit be it said, we are very poor actors in such matters. Let us cease to think of the Mediterranean basin as a home of miscellaneous dagoes and remember instead that it is the cradle of our civilization. Let us cease to think of Europe east of Vienna as ‘somewhere in the Balkans’ and remember instead that it is inhabited by some of the most interesting and delightful peoples in the world, whose intelligence and culture are at least on the level of our own. Indeed, to those who know them their unquenchable interest

in the things of the mind, amid disturbed political conditions, is a cause for constant surprise and admiration. And as for the Balkans, is not Athens a Balkan city? Above all, we must cease to think of the Asiatic peoples as backward because the greatest Indians have preferred contemplation to what we call action, and because the Chinese, when they had discovered the explosive properties of gun-powder, thought it more civilized to use them for fire-crackers than in the art of war.

If the truth must be told, we are afraid of India and China. We are afraid of India because it is embarrassing to find ourselves in a position of superiority amid a civilization older than our own. And we are afraid of China because a century of commercial contacts has left us there, too, with an uneasy sense that the external position does not correspond with the real values. In both cases our embarrassment arises from the fact that we feel that we are in a false position. There is an easy remedy for this. It is to abandon the false position. By that I do not mean that we should abandon our political responsibilities in India or abstain from using our political power to assist China in the immense social and political task that lies before her. I simply mean that we should cease to regard our proficiency in the art of politics as making us into a superior people. We *do* understand the management of public affairs—twentieth-century public affairs—better than the people of India or the people of China. That is not a reason why we should

expect the rest of the world to accept our own valuation of the importance of politics. Proficiency in politics is not a cause for arrogance: it is simply an opportunity for rendering service. It would be a pity if we were cut off from enabling others to benefit by our skill and by the fruits of our experience simply because—if I may help out my argument by an analogy—though we are excellent doctors we have an unfortunate bedside manner.

An unfortunate bedside manner is always<sup>4</sup> a handicap to a doctor. But it is a greater handicap with some patients than with others. The more sensitive resent it. Others accept it as part of the treatment. It is the same in the world of international relations. Our inhibitions hinder us relatively little in dealing with peoples at what I may call the primary school stage, and it is there that our public spirit and our practical gifts have been seen to the best advantage. These are the peoples for whom we very naturally tend to entertain a preference—I will not say a bias; for we find them easy to get on with. Very different is our relationship with the peoples with whom we stand in an attitude of what I may call reciprocal superiority. But it is just with such peoples that we shall more and more be brought into close contact in the twentieth-century world.

Thus the task before us is not easy. It means much more than the rebuilding of the League of Nations. It is the creation of the conditions *on our side* which will make the working of a League of Nations possible.

And to create those conditions—those psychological conditions—means a great deal more than an improvement in our manners. To do no more than try to improve our manners would be to go from bad to worse. A forced politeness towards foreigners is one of our most distasteful attitudes. What we need is a new discipline of the mind—a self-imposed discipline—a discipline which, without doing violence to the fundamental elements in our English make-up and, above all, without making us self-conscious, will enable us to find a more intelligent channel for our emotions. There is nothing wrong with our feelings. It is our minds that require to be expanded and clarified, so as to secure that our feelings are not only not wasted in mere sentimentality but harnessed to constructive international purposes.

Such a discipline would very soon be felt as a liberation; for no one can pretend that it is comfortable to be shut up in an ice-box. And it would not only help us abroad: it would help us at home. Indeed, just as Chesterton said that the object of a voyage round the world was to discover Battersea, so it may turn out that, in endeavouring to find a basis for the League of Nations, we shall have discovered how to get rid of the canker of class-prejudice and to achieve a real national unity.

## VII

### *THE COLONIAL PROBLEM*

**I**N the last chapter we discussed some of the problems that arise for us as British citizens and Christians through our predominant position in the world. We saw how our good intentions are liable to be obstructed by inhibitions traceable to the relations between social classes in our own country, and how we have thus been hampered in our dealings with the peoples whom I termed our social equals—the peoples of the European continent and of Latin America, the other English-speaking peoples, and the representatives of the ancient cultures of Asia and of Egypt. We turn now to a different problem—that of our relationship towards what are sometimes called primitive peoples, that is, peoples whose social institutions are not those of the large-scale twentieth-century world, but more akin to those of the inhabitants of this island two thousand years ago, and to those which we ourselves experienced at school during our adolescence.<sup>1</sup>

What is our duty as Christians towards such peoples? The question opens up the whole of what is called the Colonial Problem—an unsatisfactory name which has become current owing to the fact that most of the primitive peoples are under the government of some more advanced Power, in most

<sup>1</sup> The reference to *institutions* should not be interpreted as implying that those who use them should be regarded or treated as children or adolescents.

cases a European Power. This is, of course, by no means universally the case. There are numerous primitive populations in South America, whilst in Africa there were until yesterday two, and there still remains one sovereign State governed by Africans for Africans. For us as British Christians, however, it will be better to limit the discussion to peoples under British rule and governed from London, since it is for these that we are directly responsible.

There is another angle from which Christians have been accustomed to regard this problem. They have thought of it as a missionary problem. Certainly this goes deeper than to regard it simply as a problem of government; for it emphasizes the primary fact which is often ignored in discussions on the political plane—the fact that the African native or the South Sea islander is an individual human soul, a child of God and, as such, the equal of any member of the so-called superior peoples. It is the great achievement of the missionary movement to have kept this central dominating fact before the people of this country, and thus to have entered a standing protest against the tendency, encouraged by our economic system, to think of primitive peoples in a crude and wholesale way, from the point of view of their usefulness as a labour-force, much as though they were two-legged horses, mules, or camels. It is sufficient to mention the name of David Livingstone, that transfigured Scot who would have none but Africans around him as he passed away.

But if, as Christian students of world affairs, we

make the missionary movement our starting-point in approaching the colonial problem, we cannot rest there. Missions are not enough. I would go further and say: the function of the missionary movement is to work for its own extinction. Missions represent a transition stage in the life of a primitive people: a stage on the road towards independent native institutions, towards—let us at this point drop the word native once and for all—local churches, local self-government, a local culture that has learnt how to take what is good and to reject what is harmful in the culture of the wider world. The missionary who ministers to the individual African is only dealing with one part of the colonial problem. This has often been demonstrated only too vividly by the personality and after-career of the convert, torn violently away from his traditional surroundings, as in the old days he too often was, and plunged, socially unprepared, at once a débutant and a déraciné, into an unfamiliar world. Side by side with the problem of ministering to the individual human soul there is the problem of providing social conditions such as will ease the transition from a primitive to a more modern way of life, from social and political adolescence to social and political maturity.

Early in the present century,<sup>1</sup> thanks in large part to Dr. J. H. Oldham, to whom, if only because

<sup>1</sup> The Edinburgh World Missionary Conference of 1910, which originated the International Missionary Council, may be regarded as a starting-point for this new approach.

of his modesty, I should like to take this opportunity of paying a tribute, the missionary movement in this country awoke to the need for extending its interest from the individual to society—that society which encompasses the African at his birth in the heart of a tribe and accompanies him throughout his daily life. This directed the attention of missionaries to the labours of men of science, to the anthropologists who, from an entirely different point of departure, had been already for a generation or more concerning themselves with *Primitive Culture*—the title of the book which that great Oxford pioneer anthropologist E. B. Tylor published in 1871. It will always be a strange chapter in the history of thought that sociology, the study of man in society, in its re-emergence in modern times, should have fastened its attention first on societies as far removed as possible from our own. I leave it to the reader to explain why men of science turned the microscope of social investigation on to Africans and South Sea islanders before teaching us to look into the mirror to discover ourselves. Charles Booth's *Survey of London* (1889), the first investigation of the sort in this country, came nearly twenty years after Tylor's *Primitive Culture*. But, however that may be, it was an unmixed benefit for Africa that, side by side with the missionaries, there should be a second set of wholly disinterested labourers in the African field and that, through wise leadership and direction on both sides, they should have been drawn together.

At the same time, also at the beginning of the century, a third ally appeared, this time from the side of the government. Another great man, still happily amongst us, Lord Lugard, developed the idea and the technique of what has become known as indirect rule, but which, as one of his greatest disciples, Sir Donald Cameron, has lately said, should be more properly named the system of Native Administration.

Thus it is that the missionary, the sociologist, and the administrator have come together in dealing with the colonial problem in British Africa—and not in British Africa alone—and, by so doing, have probably made a greater advance in the last generation than has been made anywhere else in the field of government during that time. For any one who wishes to go more closely into this subject there is now a compendium of information and wise comment in the recently published *Survey* by Lord Hailey, who came fresh to African problems from official life in India, and drew new vigour and inspiration from their study. Even more instructive, because it contains so much first-hand material, is the quarterly periodical *Africa*, the journal of the International Institute of African Languages and Cultures. This Institute, founded in 1926, has become the focusing point for African studies throughout the world, its governing body comprising representatives from forty-two learned institutions in Europe, Africa, and America. Its chairman is Lord Lugard, who is

assisted by two Directors, a Frenchman (M. Henri Labouret) and a German (Dr. Westermann), and, last but not least, by an Administrative Director, Professor Coupland of Oxford.

Let us now come to closer grips with the colonial problem as, thanks to the work of missionaries, sociologists, and up-to-date administrators, we have been enabled to see it.

Let us begin by realizing the *dimensions* of the problem. It is not a small or limited issue which confronts us, not the kind of problem which can be solved by a few well-considered reforms. It is a problem as old as history—and a problem which, until our own time, has seemed to be, from the Christian standpoint, insoluble. Indeed, throughout Christian history there have been hardly more than a few voices raised to set forth the Christian standpoint with regard to it. The great Spanish thinker, Vittoria, stands almost alone until the present century in his plea that the native inhabitants of the American continent should be regarded as our fellow citizens in the fullest sense, our equals under the law.<sup>1</sup> Even the anti-slavery leaders, noble-hearted though they were, never faced the *social* implications of their programme.

From time immemorial stronger peoples have conquered weaker peoples and laid them under

<sup>1</sup> For Vittoria see the extracts given in Eppstein, *The Catholic Tradition of the Law of Nations* (1935), and for further detail James Brown Scott, *The Spanish Conception of International Law* (1934).

subjection. The Greeks called these weaker peoples barbarians, thereby implying that they were outside the pale of culture—not simply of Greek culture, but of culture as a whole. Even for Plato, the natural relationship between Greek and barbarian was one of warfare, whilst for Aristotle the terms slave and barbarian (that is to say non-Greek) were synonymous. There were indeed already in the fourth century B.C. voices raised against this inhumane and doctrinaire view. Isocrates dared to maintain that the Greeks had a duty to the barbarians—a duty to hellenize them, so that the name Greek should no longer denote common origin, but should be the symbol of a common culture. Isocrates, one may say, was the first missionary, a missionary not of religion but of culture. His outlook was justified by the event, for within two years of his death Alexander the Great ascended the Macedonian throne and embarked on the career of Asiatic conquest which opened up the whole of the west of that continent up to and even beyond the borders of India to Greek culture and Greek ideas. A generation later one of these converts, Zeno, a Cypriot of Phoenician origin, came to Athens and expounded his ideas in what was called the Painted Porch, or Stoa. The school that he thus founded, the Stoics, preached the doctrine of the unity of mankind, but a unity conceived as being within the all-embracing framework of Greek culture.

Let me give one instance that will illustrate how

in those days Greek culture was regarded as culture *par excellence*, inherently superior to any barbarian or, as some would say to-day, native product.

The city of Gadara in Palestine, familiar to us from the story of the Gadarene swine, is noted in Greek literature as the birthplace of one of the greatest among the later Greek lyric poets, Meleager, who lived in the first century B.C. Meleager wrote his own epitaph, and in the course of it he excuses himself for the fact that, though a companion, as he says, of the Greek muses, he is a Syrian. 'And if I am a Syrian, what wonder? We all dwell in one country, O stranger, the world; one Chaos brought all mortals to birth.'<sup>1</sup> Here is the expression of a *pre-national* cosmopolitanism or, one might say, of a naïve cultural imperialism. Meleager was the product, a very brilliant product, of missionary education. Though born at Gadara, he was not brought up there but at Tyre, whither, as he tells us, he was sent as a child, as a West African boy from the hinterland might be sent to Lagos or Accra or Freetown to-day.

The Romans, whose culture was largely taken over, or assimilated, from the Greeks, accepted the Greek view of the uniformity of culture. With rare exceptions, they took no interest in native life and native institutions. A man became civilized when, like St. Paul, whose birthplace was on the mainland just opposite Zeno's Cyprus, he became a Roman

<sup>1</sup> Mackail, *Select Epigrams from the Greek Anthology* (1890), p. 168.

citizen. It did not occur to the unimaginative Romans, any more than it had occurred to the more inquisitive and quick-witted Greeks, that Galatians or Spaniards or Britons might possess a culture of their own which it was their duty to foster and to develop. They admitted exceptional natives, a Jew like St. Paul, Spaniards like Seneca or Trajan, a Dalmatian like Diocletian, into the charmed circle, but they left the native peoples outside in the darkness. In this way they sapped the vitality of native life and native institutions without bringing in any fresh store of energy. They created a maladjustment which, in the opinion of some writers, including Renan and Lord Balfour, goes far to explain, on the one hand, the appeal of organized Christianity, which came out of the catacombs to fill the vacuum the Roman authorities had left, and, on the other, the eventual decline of the Roman Empire from within, due, in Lord Balfour's words, to 'some obscure disharmony between the imperial system and the temperament of the West, undetected even by those who suffered from it'.<sup>1</sup>

It is this obscure disharmony which Lord Lugard and his fellow workers have brought to light and are seeking to remedy. Their remedy can be stated very simply, though it is extremely complex in its application to individual peoples. It is to provide conquered peoples or weaker and protected peoples with a true system of law, or, to put it in another way,

<sup>1</sup> *Rede Lecture on Decadence (1908)*, p. 40.

to bring about a marriage between Force and Law, to marry the force of the stronger with the law of the weaker.

May I be allowed, at this point, to enter for a few moments into the philosophy of law? For an understanding of the nature of law is indispensable to an understanding of the dimensions of the colonial problem.

I know no better definition of law than that given by Professor Brierly in a recent address delivered to a gathering of Scandinavian jurists. 'Law', he says, 'is the conscience of a community expressing itself in rules of conduct appropriate to the conditions in which the members of the community have to live their common life.'<sup>1</sup> Apply this to Africa. Are the orders issued by a conquering or protecting Power laws in the true sense of the word? Do they carry with them the authority, the majesty, the sanctity which for us—and not for us alone, but for all self-governing peoples—attaches to the notion of law? Is it not obvious that, for an African or a South Sea islander, the white man who appears from afar, knowing nothing of their community and its customary modes of authority, of what Professor Brierly calls its conscience, cannot figure as a true *law-giver*? He may indeed bring peace, order, and good government: but, however beneficent he may be recognized to be, his commands or decrees—decrees which are no doubt obeyed, and obeyed often from

<sup>1</sup> *Acta Scandinavica Juris Gentium*, VII. i, p. 12.

motives of self-interest rather than simply of fear—are very different from the rules or laws springing from the inner life of their own community.

Thus it was genius on the part of Lord Lugard and his associates to discover, what had eluded the philosophers of Greece and the Greek-educated administrators of Rome—not to speak of their modern successors from the fifteenth to the end of the nineteenth century—namely, that the central problem of colonial rule is somehow to establish a link between the command of the stronger and the law-abiding sentiment of the weaker. And there was genius, too, in the discovery of the one and only *method* by which this link could be established—namely, through patient search, in each community, for the actual source of law, for the authority, whatever it may be, that evokes a response from the law-abiding sentiment of the people or the tribe. This involved calling upon the services of the sociologist; for it is only through a knowledge of African institutions and of the habit of mind behind these institutions that the secrets of such authority can be unveiled. Schoolboys are secretive enough; but their secrecy towards a schoolmaster who is a compatriot is as nothing compared with the secrecy of an African towards an intruding white man—unless he has forearmed himself with knowledge and sympathy.

At this point let me interrupt the argument and plunge you into the atmosphere of the Lugardian system.

In the chapter in his book on Tanganyika devoted to the system of Native Administration Sir Donald Cameron, who has been Governor both of Tanganyika and of Nigeria, recounts the following incident:

‘Although native tribal society had been broken in pieces by the Germans through the Lindi Province . . . we found years afterwards—twenty years afterwards—that the Native Courts of some of the tribes were still occasionally functioning *sub rosa* without our knowledge. After we had formed our Native Administrations in the Lindi Province as a result of prolonged investigation, as I have already described, because I felt that we were not yet entirely on the right foundations, some of the Chiefs in the Makonde area divulged to the Provincial Commissioner the fact that their own Courts had from time to time been functioning during all those years. Would he like to see one? They staged a sitting for him and he attended. He found the Chiefs whom he had recognised in the newly formed Native Administration, the Makonde Council, sitting together with one exception; one of the number that we had so recognised had been relegated to a corner of the room, where he was sitting humbly on a box and a stranger was filling his place “on the Bench”.

‘“What does all this mean,” asked the Provincial Commissioner, “why have you left —— out?”

‘“Oh,” they replied, “he is not the right man to represent that area. This is the right man here and as this is *our* own old Court we have put the right man on.”

‘The man who had been excluded in this manner readily agreed on being questioned by the Provincial Commissioner that the other fellow should be on the Council and on the Court (they were constituted alike), instead of himself, and the change was duly made.’

In this case, it will have been noticed, the official inquiry, though prolonged, had, in one case, made a mistake in its award of authority, and the personage thus unexpectedly favoured was quite ready to step down. He recognized, if I may so put it, that it was the captain of the team and not the Vice-Chancellor who was the true law-giver.

Here is another passage from the same book, vividly illustrating how the system preserves and even strengthens the African's spirit of self-respect. A District Officer, evidently a recent arrival in the region, had been delivering a homily to an elderly chief on the game laws, explaining that if he allowed his people to kill game indiscriminately it would disappear altogether. This is Sir Donald Cameron's version of the substance of the chief's reply:

'Young man, you are making rather an ass of yourself. You have been in this country but two minutes; we have been in it for generations. Moreover, in those days before your Europeans came we were much better armed than we are now. We had every opportunity during all those years of killing out the game if we had been so foolish as to do so. But we knew the folly of such a course and as you can see for yourself the game was not killed out. And it will not be killed out so far as we are concerned. I bid you good-day.'

Let us now turn from the reminiscences of an ex-governor to the pages of a sociologist. Mr. Godfrey Wilson, Director of the new Rhodes-Livingstone Institute of Central African Studies at Livingstone in

Northern Rhodesia, spent some time among the Nyakyusa people in Southern Tanganyika. The Nyakyusa live in age-villages—that is to say, villages composed of contemporaries, in the strict sense of the word, who have set up house together as boys and continue to live together after marriage. 'It is not decent, the Nyakyusa maintain,' says Mr. Wilson, 'for a boy to sleep at home after any vigorous interest in sexual activity has awakened in him.' So, as they reach the age of ten to twelve years, they leave home and build huts on ground set aside for them by their fathers. They each of them hoe their own parents' fields, but for meals they go round in groups to the houses of their respective parents, invariably returning to the boys' village at night.

Mr. Wilson gives a vivid account of life in a boys' village. The boys, he tells us, not only perfect their skill in building, but learn to argue and express themselves with adult fluency.

'It is characteristic of the Nyakyusa legal system that small cases between neighbours are always first discussed and often finally settled in the presence of some friend or friends who act as arbitrators, without recourse to the constituted political authorities. Small disputes about petty theft, the possession of a cloth or some coppers, the ownership of a banana stem and so on, are as frequent in the boys' village as elsewhere, and as elsewhere the people concerned often argue it out to a finish before some friend or neighbour. And by listening to such disputes, or participating in them either as judge or principal, the boys acquire rhetorical skill and some knowledge of

law. Above all, the boys' village gives to its members the conversation and company of more of their own contemporaries than did the group of herd boys, and company the Nyakyusa hold to be the greatest of educators. In the most explicit discourse I heard on the value of company my informant explained that cleanliness, together with rhetorical and conversational skill, were all learned in company. These are his exact words: "We say that it is by conversing with our friends that we gain wisdom; it is bad to sit quite silent always in men's company. A man who does this seems to us a fool, he learns no wisdom, he has only his own thoughts. And a man who does not spend time with other people is always dirty, he does not compare himself with any friend. We say that we learn cleanliness of body in company, the dirty ones learn from their more cleanly friends. Again, if a man is accused to the chief and is unable to defend himself easily and with eloquence we mock at him and say, 'What is the matter with you? Do you live all by yourself? How is it that you are so foolish?' We think it is bad to live alone far from other people, such a man learns nothing; he never learns to express himself well, to converse pleasantly with friends or to argue a case with eloquence. It is better to live with other people."'

Aristotle said the same thing and it has since become a commonplace of social science. But the Nyakyusa, like the Greeks, discovered it for themselves. Later on, when they marry, problems arise which demand the use of the intelligence thus sharpened in what one might call a freshmen's debating society. Every married man has at least one house and, if he is a polygynist, he often has several.

Attached to this larger or smaller homestead there are gardens in which, after the ground has been cleared by the father and his sons, his wives are each given portions of their own to plant, weed, and reap. Here let Mr. Wilson pick up the tale.

'I was discussing with a young man what happened if, in a polygynous household, the crops of one wife were a failure. He assured me that no action could possibly be taken to compel the others to give her a share of their crops, either for food or for seed; if they did give her a share it was kindness and goodwill alone that would prompt their doing so: "I saw it happen once," he continued, "in my own father's house. He had three wives and had hoed maize plots for them and divided them up, and each had planted her own maize. But, when it began to grow, that on one wife's plot was very poor while that on the others' plots was abundant, and at the harvest the one wife reaped very little maize indeed. So when the harvest was all gathered my father asked the other two whether, as they had plenty of maize, they would not give some of it to their fellow. At first they refused emphatically to give her any, saying that it had just happened so, they had reaped plenty and she had reaped little or none, but it was not their custom to divide up their crops and she, if she had reaped plenty and they had reaped little or none, would certainly not have given any of her crop to them. And they asked whether she was his favourite that he made such a suggestion. Let him, they said, spend a shilling or two on buying food for her himself. My father entreated them but still they refused.'

'"But day after day for a long time he went on entreating and persuading them, pointing out that she had

children to feed and asking if they wished her to die of hunger; he, he said, was not in any way compelling them to hand over their food, it was entirely for them to decide whether they would not each give her a little; if they disliked doing so, well there was no more to be said. And at last they began to be persuaded, they discussed it all, the two of them together, and the fact that she had children to feed, and each gave her a portion of her own crop. And later, when this maize had all been consumed, they gave her seed also for the next year's planting.”

Now, having made the acquaintance of the Nyakyusa, let us consider the problem which faces a Christian administrator or educator who, whilst respecting the customary forms of morality and authority, cannot bring himself to regard polygyny as a satisfactory system of family life. Is he to favour the destruction of the system of age-villages in order to build up instead a Christian social structure? That would be like destroying Eton and Winchester in order, let us say, to abolish corporal punishment. In the case of the Nyakyusa the solution adopted has been to establish a system of Christian age-villages, or, as one might say, to introduce a Modern Side into the old school. Mrs. Godfrey Wilson, who writes under the name of Monica Hunter, in an article published in *Africa* under the title of ‘An African Christian Morality’, gives a most interesting account of the way in which the old and the new moralities are adjusted. We cannot stay over details. I have only space for two.

The first illustrates the difficulty—a constantly recurring difficulty in these records—of dissociating the missionary from the pagan medicine-man or magician. To the African mind the missionary naturally assumes the part of a wizard armed with a very superior kind of magic. To incur blame by him in the class-room may entail the ruin of a promising career. 'H. was a very clever boy at school at —. He talked good English. One day J., a missionary, got angry with him and pointed his finger at him. We do not know what he had done. He left school and he worked for Europeans, but he always lost his job. Now he has become just a fisherman, and he talks English to the fish as he pulls them out of the lake.'<sup>1</sup>

My second illustration relates to the differences which gradually grow up between the two social moralities—the non-Christian and the Christian. 'Christian men', says Monica Hunter, 'are more chary of beating their wives than are pagans.' But, on the other hand, 'Christians themselves say that they are less hospitable with food towards neighbours than are pagans but they entertain more strangers.' Thus, in Africa, just as with us, Christianity easily becomes conventionalized. Yet no one who has immersed himself in this literature can help feeling that African Christianity is in many ways much more real than our own—sometimes too real, too close to its Gospel original, to be pleasing to

<sup>1</sup> *Africa*, x. 272.

some of the representatives of the diluted Christianity of the West.

So far I have been speaking of the old primitive tribal Africa of which the Nyakyusa are a microcosm. They number no more than 150,000 in all, not very much more than the population of Greater Oxford, and their society is almost entirely self-contained. Not, however, entirely; for one of their principal crops is coffee, and that relates them to the world market and to world prices, the instability of which disturbs the microcosm far more violently than Eton and Winchester are ever disturbed by variations in the price of pork pies or strawberry ices. But I would not like to leave the reader with the impression that the conditions just described, however picturesque, are typical of twentieth-century tropical Africa: such an impression would be resented, and rightly resented, by the educated Africans with whom the leadership of the African peoples is already beginning to rest, and is bound to rest more and more. If I picked out the Nyakyusa, it was in order to illustrate the working of the Lugardian technique under conditions where the gulf between the central government and the local unit is particularly wide and difficult to bridge. Think how much labour and skill, first in learning the language and then in winning the confidence of individuals, Mr. and Mrs. Godfrey Wilson must have expended before they unravelled the mysteries of Nyakyusa law and custom! But do not forget that British West Africa

already has its own university, Achimota in the Gold Coast Colony, which has many personal links with Oxford, and that the Master of Marlborough has lately given up his post in order to launch on its career a new institution of higher education in East Africa, at Makarere in Uganda.<sup>1</sup>

What should be the attitude of British Christians towards the colonial problem?

I hope that, in spite of the vastness of the subject, the foregoing account has supplied at least some indications for an answer to this question, so far as it concerns the missionary and the administrator. But something remains to be said, from the Christian standpoint, to those who have, and expect to have, no particular relationship to Africa or to the other peoples under British rule in Asia, in the West Indies, and in the South Seas. We need to bear in mind, far more constantly than most of us do, the responsibility that rests upon us, as British electors, for the physical and moral welfare of these peoples. We have lately become unpleasantly aware through

<sup>1</sup> A remarkable study of African conditions by an African anthropologist has lately been issued: *Facing Mount Kenya: The Tribal Life of the Gikuyu* (London, 1938), by Jomo Kenyatta, with an Introduction by Professor B. Malinowski, Professor of Anthropology in the University of London, under whom the author studied. It is worth noting in this connexion that, in a recent pamphlet on 'The Colonial Question and Racial Thought', Dr. Günther Hecht, expert for colonial questions in the racial-political office of the National-Socialist party, in laying down the principles which would govern the future treatment of natives by their German rulers, stipulates that 'in principle higher schools and Universities will be closed to natives' (see *The Times*, 12 Dec. 1938).

disturbances in Northern Rhodesia, Mauritius, British Guiana, Barbados, Jamaica, Trinidad, and elsewhere that all is not well in our colonies. If so, it is our own fault quite as much as that of the Colonial Office. If we had all been doing our duty, the recent changes in that Department providing for a closer supervision over colonial economic problems and labour conditions would have been made long ago. Nor is it very satisfactory to realize in retrospect that the now very active Advisory Committee on Education in the Colonies only came into existence in 1924 and only extended its activities beyond Africa in 1929.<sup>1</sup> It is largely due to our own sluggishness that colonial problems are too often only dealt with after trouble has occurred rather than at the earlier stage when they lend themselves more easily to constructive treatment.

May I emphasize our responsibility for the welfare of the colonies by a single illustration? Last year there was held at Sydney what was described as the First Conference of British Empire Primary Producers. The object of the conference was to work out a means for a common approach to the various governments in the Empire so as to secure an economic return to the primary producer. A very natural and reasonable object in these days of unstable prices! All I would point out is that the conference was wrongly named. It was not composed of representatives of primary producers from the whole British Empire,

<sup>1</sup> See Mayhew, *Education in the Colonial Empire* (1938).

but only of producers from self-governing countries, countries whose electors, as individuals or as associated groups, can bring pressure to bear directly on their governments. But the Asiatic, African, West Indian, and South Sea island producer is not in a position to bring pressure of this kind to bear. It is we that must do it for him, if it is to be done at all. In reading carefully through the proceedings of the Sydney Conference I found only one reference to non-self-governing producers. The representative of the New Zealand Farmers Union, in recounting the achievements of that body, remarked that 'the acquisition of New Zealand's share in Nauru Island'—a mandated island in the Pacific just south of the Equator—'which provides a cheap and abundant supply of phosphatic manures, is also due to the Union's representatives'. Certainly one would wish New Zealand farmers and our own farmers to have cheap fertilizers. But we have a duty also to the labourers who dig it out from the coral rock of the Pacific islands. I must resist the temptation to stray into the realm of commercial policy. Let me only say that the new system of trade controls—tariffs, quotas, preferences, and the like—gives an added advantage to the economic interests which command political influence, and thus throws an added responsibility on us all to protect the interests of the under-privileged.

One last issue remains. Ought we to favour the return to Germany of her former African and Pacific

territories? I say, the return to Germany, for that is the only real issue. As was said in the last chapter, the mandate system is, at best, something of a make-believe; and nothing that the present rulers of Germany have said suggests that they would even *pretend* to accept the obligations of the mandate article of the Covenant. Thus we are faced with the plain question: Ought we to withdraw British rule from these territories in order that it may be replaced by the rule of the present German Government? Reluctant as I am in general to apply Christian principles directly to current issues, this is one on which it seems to me that a Christian can have only one opinion. We have accepted a position of trusteeship for these peoples and, as I have tried to show, our rulers on the spot have not been unworthy of the trust reposed in them. There is more of justice and liberty in our African territories, despite the shortcomings that are inherent in all colonial government, than there is in present-day Germany. Indeed, if we were political logicians, which we are emphatically not, we should be driven to conclude that the German people themselves ought to be placed under a mandate in order that they might be taught, in the language of the Covenant, 'to stand by themselves in the strenuous conditions of modern life'. But to hand over politically immature Africans and South Sea islanders to the rule of politically immature Europeans would not only be a breach of the Covenant—we have grown so used to that that even

a Christian conscience is no longer pricked by it—but a clear betrayal of Christian duty. I fully recognize that, in the years immediately before the War, Germany made an effort to improve her colonial system both in West Africa and in Samoa, and that Dr. Solf in particular was a wise and enlightened administrator. But that page is turned. We cannot go back to it. Germany cannot go back to it. There is nothing to show that she desires to go back to it. The trust is ours, and we cannot relinquish it with honour.

I would put it even more strongly. If on prudential grounds we feel that it is necessary—I do not say that it is—to make substantial concessions to Germany under the threat of force, then common decency—not to speak of Christian principle—demands that these sacrifices be made out of our own substance rather than at the expense of our wards. Let us hand over such possessions as the Suez Canal shares or our holding in the Anglo-Iranian oilfields—interests which involve no human issues—rather than send some of our African fellow citizens back to pre-Lugardian methods of government. And if it is territory that the Germans must have, well, then let it be our own territory, not that of our wards. I would rather see Eton and Winchester nazified than allow the Nyakyusa to be pressed under the German steam-roller; for Eton and Winchester would emerge, in the poet's words, 'bloody but unbowed', whilst Nyakyusa society would be broken beyond repair,

like so many other social fabrics, not in Africa alone, that have been disintegrated under the impact of imperialism.

Certainly, Africa needs international co-operation. But that co-operation must be along the lines laid down by the experience of the last forty years, the co-operation of the administrator, the sociologist, and the missionary, with the welfare of the African peoples, their individual and corporate welfare, as its primary aim. It would be treachery to those who found Africa the most backward of the Continents and have made her the scene of a great and promising advance in the art of Government to push her back into the arena of power-politics.

'Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones.' The words were spoken when the Roman Empire was at the zenith of its power. Were they not meant as a warning to the great ones of the earth, in their dealings with weaker peoples, as well as to us all in our individual relations? And should they not be the charter of our African policy, which is attempting to discard once and for all the old ambition and the old greed and, for the first time in the history of empires, to apply something approaching the Christian standard?

Let me conclude by harking back to the thought from which we started. The Christian is not and never can be at home in public affairs, least of all in international affairs. His standards are not the standards of the everyday world. Between the things

of Caesar and the Kingdom of God there is a perpetual tension, a tension that is at its highest when, as in the case of Africa, Caesar's power is least subject to control. In order to play his part in Caesar's world, the Christian needs, on the one hand, to arm himself with an understanding of Caesar's problems—he must be able, so to speak, to out-Caesar Caesar on his own ground—and, on the other, the military metaphor may be excused, to keep open his line of communication with his own spiritual base.

Such is Christianity in action: a spirit, an attitude, a dynamic not tied to any system or doctrine or formula, but penetrating every issue, searching into every question, from its own particular line of approach. Christians will always differ in their political *opinions*. What unites them is something deeper than an ideology. When was the world ever in greater need of this dynamic? But when we have marshalled all our knowledge and brought all our forces into action, let us, particularly those of us who labour in the intellectual field, cherish a lively sense of our insufficiency. Let us never forget, even when we think we are doing our best, *especially* when we feel sure that we are doing our best, that we are unworthy servants.

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